

## **Book 07 – Heaven and Earth Turned Upside Down**

### **Chapter 1**

Upon hearing the words, “What a waste of a genius”, Clayde exulted mentally.

He already knew that the Holy Emperor’s choice was.

“You can leave now.” Heidens waved his arm and said calmly.

“Yes, Your Holiness.” Clayde bowed respectfully, then turned and left the top floor of the Radiant Temple. In the entire hall, only Holy Emperor Heidens now remained. Walking to a window, Heidens stared down at the city of Fenlai, maintaining a long silence.

After a long time...

“Knock!” “Knock!” “Knock!” The sound of knocking on the door.

“Enter.” Heidens said calmly.

The person who entered was Cardinal Guillermo. Guillermo glanced at Heidens’s back. Able to sense that Heidens was in a foul mood, he respectfully lowered his voice. “Your Holiness, how should we attempt to persuade Linley?”

“Persuade? No need.” Heidens said calmly.

Guillermo couldn’t help but raise his head to stare at Heidens in astonishment. If they wanted Linley to be of use to them in the future, at the very least they would have to speak with him and persuade him. After all, not only had Heidens severely injured Linley, Linley had a deep grudge against Clayde to begin with.

“Guillermo, do you know who Linley’s mother was?” Heidens turned his head to stare at Guillermo. Guillermo was startled. Curiously, he said, “Linley’s mother? Didn’t she die while giving birth to Linley’s younger brother?”

“No.”

Heidens shook his head. “When you investigated Linley’s background and information regarding his mother, you weren’t able to uncover the truth. Linley’s mother was actually that woman we acquired twelve years ago.”

That woman from twelve years ago!

Guillermo instantly remembered, because that woman had had a huge impact on the upper levels of the Radiant Church.

“But if we’ve already killed his mother, then...” Guillermo instantly understood why the Holy Emperor was now in such a foul mood.

A genius such as Linley was extremely enticing. But in the future, once Linley discovered the truth about his mother, he would be a huge threat to the Radiant Church.

“Guillermo. The 28th of this month will be the day when the glorious aura of the Radiant Sovereign will be the strongest, is it not?” Heidens said suddenly.

“Yes.” Guillermo was somewhat perplexed by Heidens raising this question.

“Make the preparations. That night, I intend to beg the Radiant Sovereign for a divine boon.” Heidens said calmly.

“Divine boon?” Guillermo was greatly shocked, but then he quickly understood Heidens’s plan. He secretly sighed to himself, “The Holy Emperor is most likely requesting this divine boon on behalf of Linley. Although this will limit Linley’s future potential, given his talent, he will still be an incredible figure. Only, what a waste of his talent.”

A Divine Boon was in reality a manifestation of the divine power of the Radiant Sovereign in the material world.

The Radiant Sovereign, as a Sovereign, one of the most powerful entities in existence, could extend a thread of his divine, faith-based power to totally cleanse a person’s soul, causing them to be wholly devoted and faithful to the Radiant Sovereign. Only a person who had already reached the Saint-level and was able to crystalize his soul would be able to resist the effects of this Divine Baptism.

Everyone else...definitely could not resist!

But after his soul had been affected by the Divine Baptism of the Radiant Sovereign, Linley’s natural talent would be impacted as well. His future accomplishments would definitely be a bit lower.

“What a waste. What a waste of a talent.” Heidens sighed again. This was the reason why earlier, in front of Clayde, he had said the words ‘what a waste’. Heidens was, however, very confident. Once he had been affected by the Divine Baptism, even if he later found out about his mother’s death, Linley would still be loyal and faithful to the Radiant Sovereign.

Because the faith this Divine Baptism created would go deep within a person's soul!

In the blink of an eye, ten days passed. The city of Fenlai was as calm as it had always been, but all the major noble clans in Fenlai felt a strange, oppressive atmosphere. For example, his Majesty, King Clayde, was always in a terrible mood these days, and several major ministers and nobles had run afoul of his temper and been executed.

On the Fragrant Pavilion Road, behind a lavishly decorated hotel, a group of people were gathered together within a quiet, three-story building.

Yale, George, and Reynolds had been here this entire time.

Ever since they had found out about what happened to Linley, the three of them had continued to worry for Linley. They knew very well what a huge disaster Linley had dragged down upon himself. Not only had he openly attacked King Clayde and killed over a thousand elite warriors of the kingdom, he had even forced the Holy Emperor himself to subdue him in the end.

"Boss Yale, have your people heard any news of Linley yet?" George asked, and Reynolds looked at Yale as well.

Yale shook his head.

All of them had ugly looks on their faces. They had grown up alongside Linley. At the Ernst Institute, they had eaten together and roomed together. Although they weren't actual siblings, they were as every bit as close to each other as real brothers were. There was no way they could just stand by and watch as Linley was executed.

"There's no way. I don't have any means of reaching the high level people in the Radiant Church." Yale was somewhat frantic. "Wait a few more days. My father will arrive soon."

Yale's father.

Monroe [Men'luo] Dawson!

The Chairman of the Dawson Conglomerate, and the controller of the enormously powerful Dawson clan, whose wealth made even the Four Great Empires and the two major alliances envious. Their mercantile web had already encompassed every city in the Yulan continent, and was totally able to determine whether a nation's economy flourished or collapsed.

Each of the three major trading unions possessed tremendous power.

Neither the two major alliances nor the Four Great Empires were willing to be openly hostile against them, because once one of the trading unions was openly at war with an empire, it could very well trigger an economic collapse, wiping out decades of progress and causing chaos within its domain.

"Boss Yale, you told us to wait a few more days two days ago! If we keep on waiting, I'm afraid..." Reynolds was frantic as well.

There was nothing Yale could do.

Fortunately, his father had been engaging in some tourism in a kingdom not too far from the Kingdom of Fenlai. Upon getting the news, Yale had immediately gotten in touch with his father and expressed the hope that his father could come to Fenlai City as quickly as possible. Given his father's status as the Chairman of the Dawson Conglomerate, most likely Heidens would personally welcome him to the city.

Once his father appeared, the chances of rescuing Linley would be exponentially greater.

"Young master, young master!" A skinny, tall youth came running in, excited.

"Young master, the Chairman has arrived!"

"Father!"

Yale leapt to his feet in joy. In the eyes of Reynolds and George as well, a hint of hope appeared.

Within the VIP reception hall of the Radiant Temple.

A two-meter tall, bald, pudgy man stepped into the hall, grinning merrily. This bald fatty was two meters tall and of enormous girth, most likely weighing 300-400 pounds.

This was the Chairman of the Dawson Conglomerate – Monroe Dawson! From another door, in walked the Holy Emperor – Heidens.

Heidens was also nearly two meters tall, but he was quite thin. The two of them together, both tall, both bald, but one fat while the other was skinny, made for a very interesting sight.

Behind Monroe Dawson, there were two middle-aged men. One was a golden-haired man with cold, hawk-like eyes, while the other was a powerfully built red-haired man. These two followed solemnly behind Monroe Dawson. Without question, the two of them were both combatants of the ninth rank!

Behind Heiden, as well, there were two red-robed Cardinals, one male, one female. These two were Guillermo and Melina [Ma'li'na].

"Oh, Your Holiness."

Monroe called out in an exaggeratedly loud voice as he attempted to bow. However, that large belly of Monroe's made bowing an extremely difficult thing to do.

"Monroe, please sit." Heidens was still quite friendly to him.

Monroe immediately sat down, as did Heidens.

Monroe's enormous butt was simply too big. Most chairs wouldn't be a good fit for him. Fortunately, the Radiant Church had prepared a special chair for him in advance. Upon sitting down, a delighted grin split his rotund face, and he laughed loudly. "Thank you, your Holiness. On this trip, I had only intended to do some sightseeing near Greenstone Lake, but who would've thought that my son would insist on me hurrying over here? Alas, you should understand that as a father, I had no choice."

"Monroe, you really do pamper little Yale." Heidens said with a smile.

Monroe nodded helplessly. "Hehe, that little tyke. But I've heard Yale say that he has an extremely incredible bro by the name of Linley. Not only is he a master sculptor, he is a genius magus, and also a very powerful warrior. When I heard this, I was very much impressed. But from what Yale says, this Linley has now been imprisoned within the Radiant Temple."

"This is indeed the case." Heidens nodded in acknowledgment.

Monroe chortled, "Your Holiness, can you give me some face and free Linley? Young people are always so impetuous. Although I know he attempted to assassinate Clayde, in the end, Clayde didn't die, right? I'm sure that your Holiness wouldn't care too much about a small matter like this."

Monroe spoke casually and simply.

But Heidens couldn't respond to him in as casual a manner.

This Monroe Dawson had gone so far as to explicitly ask Heidens to give him face. If Heidens refused, wasn't that the same as directly refusing to give Monroe face? Although Monroe was grinning cheerfully, Heidens knew very well how powerful the Dawson Conglomerate standing behind Monroe was.

“Monroe.” Heidens shook his head. “It isn’t that I won’t give you face. It’s that it’s really not convenient for me to free him. Because...Linley killed several people from the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, including students of Osenno [Wu’sen’nuo] himself. Osenno is extremely angry this time.”

“Osenno?” Monroe Dawson frowned.

Osenno was one of the other pillars of the Radiant Church – the Praetor of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal.

In truth, it should be said that the Radiant Church actually had two leaders; the public leader known as the Holy Emperor, and the hidden leader in charge of killings, slaughters, and eliminating heathens and apostates – the Praetor of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal.

“This is going to be difficult.” Monroe immediately knew that this was not good.

Perhaps Heidens would care somewhat about Monroe’s status, but that cold fellow Osenno was nothing but a crazed killer.

But Monroe Dawson could also guess something.

“Linley killed the students of Osenno? These words are most likely a lie spun by Heidens, but there’s no way I’ll be able to verify this with Osenno.” Monroe felt helpless. He could tell that clearly, Heidens did not wish to let Linley go that easily.

The Dawson Conglomerate really did have its eyes set on Linley.

This was especially true after discovering that Linley was capable of Dragonforming. In terms of both his potential as a magus as well as a warrior, Linley’s potential was incredible. Once the Dawson Conglomerate acquired Linley, when Linley entered the Saint-level, the influence of the Dawson Conglomerate would instantly supersede that of the other two trading unions.

“If that’s the case, then I’ll leave now.” Monroe Dawson immediately stood up.

Heidens smiled calmly. “I truly am sorry, Monroe. Right now, the Radiant Church has not internally decided on how we should punish Linley. After we have decided on how we should deal with Linley, I’ll send someone to inform you.”

“Sure. During this period of time, I’ll stay in Fenlai City. I really want to see the upcoming Yulan Festival. This 10000th Yulan Festival is sure to be an amazing spectacle. In a man’s entire life, he might only see such a spectacle this one time.” Monroe Dawson beamed as he spoke.

After speaking, Monroe Dawson departed with his two bodyguards.

Heidens quietly watched as Monroe Dawson departed. By his side, Guillermo said quietly, "Your Holiness, that damn fatty foolishly thinks he can claim Linley for his own. After the 28th, Monroe can abandon all of his hopes."

Heidens turned to glance at Guillermo. Smiling, he left the hall as well.

Right now, the only thing to do was to wait for December 28th.

## Chapter 2

On the ninth floor of the Radiant Temple.

Linley seemed to have been discarded here and forgotten. The only people who came were the cold, grim purple-robed Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal who came each day bringing his meals. His arms and legs both broken, Linley's only choice was to squirm over then lower his head to the food.

Within the dark, gloomy cell, one such day after another passed.

Life? Or death?

Linley didn't know which it would be, but Linley wouldn't so easily give up any hope of staying alive.

These past few days, Linley had spent his time reviewing why his attempt at gaining revenge this time had failed. Almost everything had been within his calculations, and he even included the existence of Clayde's magical beast companion in his plans. But Linley hadn't expected that Clayde would have a Saint-level magical barrier enchantment!

Producing a barrier enchantment was far more difficult than just casting a spell.

To produce a Saint-level barrier enchantment, the effort that needed to be expended in both spiritual energy and mageforce was greater than the effort needed to directly cast a Saint-level magical spell. Linley didn't believe that Clayde would have a Saint-level barrier enchantment on him.

Even Doehring Cowart had said: "Forget about Clayde. Most likely, even the Cardinals of the Radiant Church wouldn't have a Saint-level barrier enchantment on them."

Given Linley's power as a warrior of the ninth rank in Dragonform, and combined with Bebe's power, Clayde should've died without a doubt. Although Linley was perhaps a bit too hasty in his plan to get revenge, he should've had a nearly 100% chance of success. Alas, that Fateguard enchantment ruined Linley's plans.

"Who would've thought that a mere ruler of a kingdom would have a Saint-level barrier enchantment!" Linley was still unable to accept it.

He really just couldn't.

The temperature of these winter nights was now extremely cold. There were very few people on the streets of Fenlai City. A black Shadowmouse was standing in a corner of an intersection, staring up at the tall and far-off Radiant Temple. The little Shadowmouse just stood there and stared, not moving at all.

That entire night, the little Shadowmouse remained there staring, even after the sun began to rise.

He didn't dare to enter the Radiant Temple, because he knew very well that the Radiant Temple was a place where even Saint-level combatants feared to tread. He, a rat-type magical beast, wouldn't be able to escape. If in the end he was captured as well, Linley would only be even more heartbroken.

It was day now.

"Boss, I will definitely avenge you." Bebe glanced at the Radiant Temple one final time, then with a flicker, disappeared.

Over the entire past twenty days, the Shadowmouse, Bebe, had been thinking about how to avenge Linley. But he discovered that Clayde was now as cautious as a bird which had been frightened by the twang of a bow. Not only did he order magi to lay multiple magical formations around him, he also ordered Kaiser to constantly remain by his side. The little Shadowmouse didn't have any chance to ambush him at all.

However, Bebe was very patient.

He would wait, continue to wait patiently. He would wait for the day when Clayde let down his guard, and then suddenly appear and chew Clayde into a meaty paste, avenging Linley.

Midnight, December 28th.

"Clank!"



The door to Linley's holding cell swung open, and two Vicars stepped in. They didn't seem as cold and sinister as the Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, and they even brought a gurney. Very carefully, they placed Linley on top of the gurney, and then lifted the gurney with Linley on top of it.

"What are you doing?" Linley coldly looked at the two Vicars.

Recollecting how Linley had slaughtered people in the past, the two Vicars felt some fear in their hearts towards him.

"Lord Linley, the Holy Emperor is preparing to treat your injuries." A female Vicar said in a soft voice.

"Treat my injuries?"

Linley's heart stirred. "Can it be that the Holy Emperor really is going to let me live?" Linley didn't say anything else, maintaining his silence. He allowed the two Vicars to carry him further upstairs into the top of the Radiant Temple. One floor after another...

Finally, the two Vicars carrying Linley arrived at the top floor of the Radiant Temple. Currently, this floor was very empty. In the middle of the room, there was a very complicated-looking octagram magical formation. In each of the eight corners of the octagram, there sat quiet, barefoot Ascetics with disheveled hair and sackcloth clothes. In the very center of the octagram stood the Holy Emperor Heidens, who was wearing an ornate white robe.

At the edges of this top floor, there were three Cardinals, and two Deputy Arbiters along with six Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal. All of these people were combatants of the ninth rank. One could tell how powerful the Radiant Church was, for it to be able to summon so many combatants of the ninth rank.

"Put him down. You can leave now." Guillermo spoke.

"Yes." The two Vicars didn't even dare to breathe loudly. Right now, within this very room, there were astonishingly powerful Ascetics, mysterious Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, three Cardinals, and two Deputy Arbiters.

These were all important, major figures.

After putting down Linley, the two Vicars hurriedly, respectfully departed, and the door once more was shut behind them.

Lying on the gurney, Linley swept the people present with his gaze. Linley could easily tell that every single person here possessed incredible, astonishing power, all at least of the ninth rank or higher. "Your Holiness, what are you intending?" Linley said in a hoarse voice.

Heidens glanced at Linley. Laughing calmly, he said, "Linley, although this time you committed a major offence, after the internal deliberations of the Church, we have decided to give you another chance. Right now, we are preparing to execute a joint spell and use it to help you heal your wounds in the best possible way."

If Linley had any experience whatsoever with light-style magic, he would've quickly seen the gaps in Heidens claims.

"Grandpa Doehring, it seems like the Radiant Temple is planning something major." Linley was conversing mentally with Doehring Cowart.

"What's going on outside?" Doehring Cowart very prudently didn't appear, not daring to reveal even a hint of his spiritual power.

Heidens was a peak-stage Saint-level combatant. If Doehring Cowart left the Coiling Dragon ring, the Holy Emperor would definitely discover him.

"There's around twenty or so people outside, and even the weakest is at least of the ninth rank. There are eight Ascetics and the Holy Emperor standing in an octagram magical formation." Linley reported.

Doehring Cowart had far more experience than Linley. "Linley, if they just wanted you to fully recover, a single Saint-level combatant using the Lifelight spell would be enough to fully heal you. There's no need for them to do all of this. I think they must be planning to summon the divine energy of a Sovereign of Light. Otherwise, there'd be no need for them to cause such a commotion."

There was more than one Sovereign of Light.

The Radiant Sovereign, however, was the most powerful one of them.

"Summoning the power of a Sovereign?" Linley was greatly shocked. "They intend to use the power of a Sovereign against me? What are they intending?"

"I'm not sure either."

In Doehring Cowart's era, both the Radiant Church and the Cult of Shadows were fairly small and weak. There nothing more than two religions amongst many in the

Pouant Empire. Back then, the Radiant Church also had very few experts, and couldn't possibly produce as many as they did today.

"Your Holiness. It is time." Guillermo said respectfully.

Heidens raised his head upwards, looking at the sky, then nodded.

"Let us begin." Heidens said calmly.

A white light immediately began to emanate from the bodies of those eight Ascetics seated within the corners of the octagram, causing an extremely dense wave of light-style mageforce to flow into the center of the magical formation. The entire magical formation immediately grew bright. In front of Heidens, a golden holy scripture suddenly appeared, while Heidens himself slowly began to radiate a golden light.

Heidens opened the scripture to its first page.

"Lord, it is you who grant us everything." Heidens said softly, but his voice rang out in the hearts of everyone present like a thunderclap. At the same time, the glow from the holy scripture brightened dramatically, and the amount of holy white light in the magical formation increased dramatically as well.

Two lines of light intersected.

"Crackle, crackle."

A perfectly straight line of light shot upwards, piercing into and through the very tip of the Radiant Church, then continuing upwards into the dark night. Anyone in Fenlai City would be able to clearly see this holy white light, entwined with a golden light, penetrate into and past the clouds.

Within the top floor of the Radiant Temple.

Heidens suddenly turned to look at Linley. Linley felt as though an extremely dense power was lifting him up, causing him to slowly rise into the air. Linley floated over to the middle of the magical formation, directly above Heidens' head.

"Lord, you take pity on and love the people of this world, and in turn, we must put our faith in you."

Heidens raised his head, an incomparably holy radiance emanating from his face.

"Rumble."

The air above the Radiant Temple began to tremble. A cloud of white light began to gather in the air above the Radiant Temple, covering an extremely large expanse of space. Many of the people in Fenlai City noticed it.

“If one betrays you, Lord, then you shall take everything from them. But those who place their faith in you, Lord, shall receive your benevolence and your love.”  
Heidens flipped to the next page in the holy scripture. “Boom!”

The world shook. In the air above the Radiant Temple, the darkness of the night had been shattered by that exceedingly bright cloud of light. In the middle of the cloud of bright light, a single crack appeared in space, and a line of white light shot down from the crack at high speed.

“Swish!”

That line of white light carried with it a majestic presence which filled everyone’s hearts with awe. It pierced straight through the tip of the Radiant Chapel before finally landing on Linley, who was hovering in the air above the magical formation.

Within the top floor of the Radiant Chapel.

Heidens, the eight Ascetics, the three Cardinals, the two Deputy Arbiters, and the six special Executors all raised their heads, looking at Linley. The majestic power that line of white light embodied filled even the heart of Heidens with awe and worship.

Although it was just a hint of divine power, this power came directly from the Radiant Sovereign himself.

The white light penetrated Linley’s body, and Linley’s entire body immediately began to emanate that white light as well. At the same time, Linley’s body began to heal at an astonishing speed. In the blink of an eye, Linley’s shattered bones and wounds were all healed, and his physical condition was restored to a better than ever condition.

“Ah!”

Linley’s soul moaned. When that ray of white light had entered Linley’s body, the healing effects had only been a side effect. The primary target of this ray of white light was Linley’s soul. Clearly, this ray of white light wished to sink into and merge with Linley’s soul.

Once this divine power merged with Linley’s soul, then Linley would never again be able to shake off the control of the Radiant Sovereign, and would forever be his loyal vassal.

But just as this was happening....

An incomparably powerful force surged forth from the Coiling Dragon ring on Linley's finger. Passing through Linley's body, it rushed straight to Linley's brain. That terrifyingly powerful force surrounded the divine power in Linley's body and rapidly began to devour and dispel it.

And then, that burst of unimaginable power once more travelled through Linley's body and re-entered the Coiling Dragon ring.

"Grandpa Doebling, what is going on?" Linley said frantically.

"No idea. That force belonged to the Coiling Dragon ring itself. That force was terrifyingly powerful. It was terrifying... terrifying... terrifyingly powerful." Doebling Cowart was so shocked and nervous that he repeated the word 'terrifying' three times.

Doebling Cowart had been in possession of the Coiling Dragon ring five thousand years ago, but he had never had any inkling that such an unsurpassable power lay dormant within the ring.

Doebling Cowart was absolutely certain that if that power had been used to attack someone, even ten peak-stage Saint-level combatants would've been reduced to dust in the blink of an eye.

"Where did this burst of power come from, and what was it? Even I, the owner and master of this Coiling Dragon ring, was unable to sense it, much less control it." Linley knew very well that this power was not so easily used. In the past, Doebling Cowart had worn and used this ring for over a thousand years when he was alive, but had never used or discovered this burst of power.

While this was occurring....

All of the people in the top floor of the Radiant Temple were astonished. The Holy Emperor Heidens, the eight Ascetics, the three Cardinals, the two Deputy Arbiters, and the six Executors all stared in disbelief. They could tell that Linley's body didn't show a single hint of having received the Divine Baptism. There wasn't even a Radiant Seal on his forehead.

"How is this possible? It failed?" Heidens stared at Linley, stunned.

## Chapter 3

All of the powerful people in the highest floor of the Radiant Temple were stunned. Linley's soul was a huge distance away from the level of crystallizing. He was nothing more than a magus of the seventh rank. Even an Arch Magus of the ninth rank wouldn't be able to resist the Divine Baptism of the Radiant Sovereign.

"How is this possible?" The Ascetics, Executors, and Deputy Arbiters all began to mumble amongst themselves, unable to believe what they had just seen.

"It actually failed. The divine boon actually failed to successfully create a new Blessed One. Then...how should we deal with this Linley?" Heidens stared at Linley, suspended in mid-air. "An absolute genius such as him will definitely be a peak-stage Saint-level combatant within a hundred years. He might even become more powerful than me. By that time, the glory of our Radiant Church will be able to spread across an even wider territory."

Heidens really couldn't bear to just kill Linley.

"Your Holiness?" Guillermo called out softly.

Heidens's lost, confused gaze suddenly sharpened. He had made his decision.

"Your Holiness, Linley hasn't become a Blessed One. Then we...?" Guillermo asked.

Heidens looked at Linley. Under his control, Linley's body slowly drifted down to the floor. At this point in time, Linley pushed himself to a standing position with his hands. Right now, Linley's body was totally uninjured. It must be said that receiving a divine boon had its benefits.

Linley looked at the mighty people surrounding him.

"These people are all combatants of the ninth rank at least. If I were to struggle against them, I wouldn't have any chance at all." Linley coldly stared at Heidens and the others. "Your Holiness, what exactly are you intending to do with me?"

Suddenly, a smile appeared on Heidens face. "No need to ask too much. Executors, return Linley to his private room." "Yes, Your Holiness." Those six special Executors nodded.

Without giving Linley any chance to react, they immediately headed towards Linley, as one of them barked out, "Move! Or do you want us to drag you?"

They were forcing him by their actions. Linley had no options.

“Fine.” Linley opened the door and began to walk downwards. Those six Executors followed directly behind Linley. As Linley went down the stairs one level at a time, he saw that all of the guards, upon seeing those six Executors, were all extremely respectful.

Those six special Executors all wore bluish-violet robes. Those icy eyes of theirs stared at Linley, making him feel as though...if he acted untowardly in any way at all, they would immediately kill him.

After the six Executors had escorted Linley away, the female Cardinal, Melina, asked, “Your Holiness, that Linley didn’t become a Blessed One. Although we don’t know the reason why not, the decision we must come to right now is, what should we do with Linley?”

Guillermo and the others all looked at Heidens.

Linley was a genius. They all knew this. But Linley hadn’t become a Blessed One, and his mother had been killed by the Radiant Church. The Church had to come to a decision: Would they accept the risk of recruiting Linley and hide the truth behind the death of his mother? Or would Linley be put to death?

Although it would be possible to hide the truth behind his mother’s death for a time, once Linley entered the highest ranks of the Radiant Church, it would most likely be impossible to hide it any longer.

Heidens’ face was cold. In a cold voice, he said, “Kill.”

Guillermo and the others felt their hearts quiver.

“In a few more days, it will be the 10000 year anniversary of the Yulan Festival. Let’s arrange for Linley’s execution to be after the festival.” Heidens announced.

Guillermo, who had the closest relationship with Linley, sighed in his heart.

A genius who would have dominated the entire continent would now see his fate cut short. Guillermo knew very well that with Linley imprisoned in the Radiant Temple, there was no way Linley would be able to escape. Linley wouldn’t even be able to leave his cell.

“That Cesar has some sort of a relationship with Linley, but even Cesar doesn’t have the ability to break into the Radiant Temple to rescue Linley.” Guillermo sighed secretly.

Linley would definitely die!

On the ninth floor of the Radiant Temple, within the private cell.

“Get in.”

Linley entered the cell, and the six Executors closed the door behind him.

As the six Executors turned and immediately left, one of them, a silver-haired man, turned to look at Linley. “Kid, let me give you a reminder. Although you have recovered your strength, don’t dream about breaking out of this cell.”

The other five Executors halted as well, and a bald old Executor laughed, “Break out of the cell? Kid, if you are able to break out of this cell, that would mean your power is on the level of his Holiness himself.”

“What do you mean?” Linley asked.

Linley himself couldn’t see anything special about this cell. Given his power as a warrior of the ninth rank when Dragonformed, an ordinary stone cell would be shattered as easily as paper.

“The Radiant Temple is the most incredible edifice the Radiant Church possesses. The entire Temple itself hides a massive magical formation within it known as the Glory of the Radiant Sovereign. It’s impossible for you to do the slightest bit of damage to it, whether from the inside or from the outside.” That silver-haired man said proudly. “Kid, let me tell you, the only chance you have of breaking out from this cell is by breaking the lock on the cell door. I can also tell you that the lock is made from metals that were alloyed with some adamantine.”

Finished speaking, the six Executors laughed loudly amongst each other, then left.

Linley was silent.

When he heard the words, ‘adamantine’, Linley understood that it was probably impossible for him to break out. According to legend, when the earth-style spell Earthguard reached the Deity level, the Earthguard armor would be composed of adamantine. Its power and durability was enough to be able to withstand several blows of even a Deity-level combatant. As for a Saint-level combatant, there was no way at all for them to break it.

Linley was an earth-style magus, and so naturally he knew about the legends regarding the Earthguard armor at its peak power.



Upon becoming a Saint-level Grand Magus, the Earthguard armor would be composed of diamonds, and upon breaking through to the Deity-level, the armor would be of adamantine.

“Linley, I expect that this cell is used for the Radiant Church to imprison combatants of the ninth rank, or perhaps even the Saint-level.” Doehring Cowart spoke.

“Although this lock only has a trace amount of adamantine and isn’t pure adamantine, it would probably be hard for even a Saint-level combatant to break it.”

Linley nodded.

From the words of the Executors, he had already figured out that he would not be able to break out, as they had said that breaking out would demonstrate Linley’s power was at least on par with the Holy Emperor.

That next afternoon.

Monroe Dawson, Yale, Reynolds, and George were all seated together around a table covered with breakfast items. During this period of time, Yale, Reynold, and George had never stopped being worried about Linley. But even Monroe Dawson making a personal appeal had failed. What could they possibly do?

Break into the Radiant Temple to rescue Linley? Even Monroe Dawson wouldn’t dare to do such a thing.

“Yale, in two days, it’ll be the Yulan Festival. This Yulan Festival will be the 10000th Yulan Festival, which we’ll only see once in our lives. You three kids can have a nice, rowdy time.” Monroe Dawson chortled.

Monroe Dawson had treated these two dear bros of his son Yale with the utmost friendliness.

This was because all three of Yale’s bros were quite out of the ordinary. Linley, George, and Reynolds. Reynolds’ clan possessed an astonishing amount of power in the O’Brien Empire’s military. George’s clan held tremendous influence within the Yulan Empire, and wasn’t much weaker than the Leon clan.

As for Linley, although his clan was now weak, it was still the clan of the Dragonblood Warriors. And Linley’s own potential was limitless.

Suddenly, the sound of footsteps.

“Milord Chairman, an emissary of the Radiant Church have arrived.” A servant said respectfully.

Hearing the words “Radiant Church”, the eyes of Yale, George, and Reynolds all lit up, and they turned to look at the servant. Monroe Dawson knew what his son was thinking, and he immediately instructed with a laugh, “Let them in.”

“Yes.”

A short while later, a Vicar walked in. He said respectfully, “Chairman Dawson. His Holiness instructed me to deliver this letter to you.” As he spoke, he withdrew from within his clothes a beautifully, lavishly decorated letter.

The servant immediately accepted the letter, then gave it to Monroe Dawson.

Monroe Dawson immediately opened the letter. But upon seeing the contents of the letter, his face changed. He said coldly, “You can leave now.”

That Vicar bowed slightly, then left.

“Father. What is in the letter?” Yale asked urgently. “Does it have to do with Third Bro?” Reynolds and George all looked hopefully at Monroe Dawson.

Monroe Dawson nodded.

“The Holy Emperor informs me that the internal deliberations of the Radiant Church have concluded. They will execute Linley in secret.” Monroe Dawson’s words were like thunder, ringing in the ears of Yale, Reynolds, and George, whose faces immediately turned white. They were stunned for a long moment.

“No, no way.”

Yale was the first to begin shouting. He snatched the letter from his father’s hands, and with shaking hands held it as he began to read. By his side, Reynolds and George both craned their necks to take a look as well. But when the three of them saw the contents, they all turned frantic with fear.

“No!!!”

Yale leapt out of his seat, intending to rush directly out of the hall. “Yale!” Monroe Dawson frowned, shouting coldly.

“Stop him.” Monroe Dawson ordered.

Yale turned his head to stare at his father. Frantic, he said, “Father, I beg you, lead some men to rescue Third Bro. If necessary, the Conglomerate can give up something valuable. I refuse to believe that the Radiant Church won’t care whatsoever about our Conglomerate. Father, I beg you.”

"Hmph, what do you know? If there really were terms that could be negotiated, the Holy Emperor would've started negotiating with me long ago. The grievance which Linley has with the Radiant Church clearly isn't what we thought it was. Otherwise, the Radiant Church wouldn't decide to execute a genius like him. Enough. Men, escort your young master to his room. Let him spend a good period of time calming down."

Immediately, the guards escorted Yale back to his room. No matter how frantically or how angrily Yale protested, it was of no use.

Reynolds and George could only maintain their silence.

They didn't have any special relationship with Monroe Dawson, after all. But in their hearts, they were frantic on Linley's behalf.

A visitor had arrived at Linley's cell. It was Guillermo.

"Guillermo." Linley looked at Guillermo with some surprise.

Guillermo had brought with him an extremely lavish meal, and delivered it through the small opening in the cell door.

Guillermo looked at Linley. He let out a sigh. "Linley, I really viewed you very favorably. But...alas. Perhaps it was meant to be, that you couldn't become a member of our Radiant Church. Alright, have a good meal. You won't have many meals left."

Hearing these words, Linley was stunned.

"Lord Guillermo, what do you mean by saying this?" Linley looked at Guillermo.

Guillermo let out a sigh. "In two days, which is to say, January 2nd, the last day of your existence will arrive." Guillermo really did like this young man, Linley. Especially after finding out the reason why Linley attempted to assassinate Clayde, Guillermo felt all the more regretful for how Linley's fate had turned out.

He could've had a glorious future, but for the sake of his parents' deaths, he was willing to forsake everything in order to gain revenge.

Although he, Guillermo, would never have acted in such a way, in his heart, he still felt admiration for Linley.

"January 2nd?"

Linley's facial expressions changed several times, but finally he closed his eyes. He already completely understood. Clearly, in two days, he would be put to death.

"Thank you, Lord Guillermo. If it wasn't for you, I would've clung to the hope of surviving." Linley laughed calmly.

Guillermo looked at Linley. With a low sigh, he shook his head, then turned his head, leaving Linley alone in his cell.

"January 2nd. They had to wait until after the Yulan Festival to kill me, eh? Tomorrow will be the Yulan Festival. I believe it will also be the day of Kalan and Alice's marriage as well, right?" Knowing that he was about to die, Linley somehow felt calmer and more at peace than he ever had before.

## Chapter 4

The night between year 9999 and year 10000. The snow flew about as the temperature in Fenlai City dropped to an astonishing low. Within a cold cell in the Radiant Temple, Linley was resting against one of the icy stone walls of the cell.

Linley didn't notice the cold at all.

"I know that I am about to be put to death, but I don't have any ability to resist at all." Linley lowered his head, sighing softly.

He had made attempts, had tried.

But this cell was exactly as the Executor had described. It possessed incredible endurance, and even in Dragonform Linley was not able to break the lock or the room in the slightest. All he could do was quietly wait for the sentence which was soon to be carried out.

The dark night went by quickly, and that great blizzard finally came to an end as well. Both the nobles as well as the commoners were celebrating, in their own ways, the arrival of this 10000th Yulan Festival on this glorious, cloudless day. In particular, the Radiant Temple.

On this day, in the air above the Radiant Temple, countless beautiful mirages and illusions created by magical formations were on display.

In the Holy Capital, Fenlai City, today was a day for a sea of celebrations. That massive plaza in front of the Radiant Temple was filled to the brim with people who

hailed from all sorts of places. Everyone was calling out in excitement to each other over this 10000th Yulan Festival, and the Radiant Temple organized many lively activities as well.

Yale, Reynolds, and George were within the third floor of a hotel. They stared at the far-away Radiant Temple Plaza. The plaza was covered densely by people, a veritable sea of people.

“Boss Yale, are we going to go to the wedding ceremony of the Debs clan today?” George asked.

The wedding of Kalan of the Debs clan was on Yulan Day. Today was an extremely propitious day, and there were many families in Fenlai City holding wedding ceremonies on this day. These sorts of weddings would start at noon, and continue until nightfall.

“Yes. Of course.” Yale had an ugly look on his face.

Due to Linley’s affairs, Yale, George, and Reynolds were all in low spirits.

“Hmph, Third Bro was too soft-hearted towards this bitch and that punk Kalan. But now, Third Bro is going to be executed, while that bitch and that punk Kalan are going to be enjoying themselves and hold a wedding ceremony.” Yale was burning with rage.

He had never looked kindly upon Alice and Kalan.

Especially right now, with Linley on the verge of being executed, and himself unable to save him. He had no place to vent his frustrations and anxiety. This only made him now view Alice and Kalan even more unfavorably.

“Right. They want their wedding to go smoothly? In their dreams!” Reynolds ground his teeth as well.

Even George felt a desire to wreck this wedding.

Yale, George, and Reynolds had all been consumed by worry for Linley for days now. Knowing that Linley was about to die, but not having the ability to rescue him, they couldn’t help but think back to all the years they had spent together growing up. They hated themselves all the more for not having the power to save him.

And right at this time, Alice, who had discarded Linley, was now going to get married to Kalan.

How could these three just let it slide?

On Greenleaf Road, the Deb's clan's manor.

At noon, one noble or magnate after another arrived at the Debs clan's manor. Although after the smuggling case, the Debs clan was no longer one of the topmost clans of the Kingdom of Fenlai, they were still a clan with some influence. At least, in the Kingdom of Fenlai, they could still be ranked amongst the top twenty. "Lord Count Juneau has arrived!"

"Lord Baron Prey [Pu'lei] has arrived!"

Nobles, noble ladies, affluent girls, all entered the manor of the Debs clan. The leader of the Debs clan, Bernard, welcomed them all in a very friendly manner. The Debs clan's power had shrunk dramatically, but within the Kingdom of Fenlai, they were still able to remain standing on fairly stable footing.

"Lord Duke Bonalt has arrived!"

Hearing the words 'Duke Bonalt', many nobles turned to look at the door. Even Bernard immediately hurried over to welcome him. Right now, the highest ranking person attending this wedding ceremony would be Duke Bonalt. Last time, at the engagement ceremony, even King Clayde, the ruler of Fenlai, had come. But this time, for the wedding proper, his Majesty did not come.

Everyone knew the reason why.

"Lord Duke, your attendance brings great honor and joy to our Debs clan." Bernard said humbly.

Duke Bonalt nodded.

After the assassination attempt at Linley's manor, the Right Premier Merritt had died. Although Clayde had promoted another important minister to the rank of Right Premier, in terms of influence, there was no way he could compare for now with Merritt, who had been Right Premier for decades.

What's more, the Minister of Finance, Patterson, was also dead. Right now, in the entire Kingdom of Fenlai, perhaps the most powerful, influential figure aside from the ruler was this Left Premier, Duke Bonalt.

"Kalan, come and pay your respects to Duke Bonalt." Bernard immediately called out.

Kalan was dressed very handsomely today. The pure black tailored suit he was wearing made him the most outstanding-looking young man present today. Kalan very modestly bowed in front of Duke Bonalt. "Duke Bonalt, welcome to my wedding."

"Congratulations, Kalan." Duke Bonalt said with a casual laugh. But just at this moment...

"Young master Yale of the Dawson Conglomerate has arrived!"

When these words rang out, Bernard's eyes immediately lit up, and even Duke Bonalt headed over alongside him. These other nobles of Fenlai naturally couldn't compete with the Dawson Conglomerate. The Dawson clan of the Dawson Conglomerate was one of the most powerful clans within the entire Yulan continent.

Yale, dressed in a sleek black suit.

Reynolds, dressed in a handsome blue suit.

George, dressed in a faintly checkered white suit.

The three walked in, shoulder by shoulder, causing all the watching nobles to stare at them with bright eyes. Generally speaking, magi would have a certain aura about them. This was because magi often entered the meditative state, resulting them being very much in sync with natural elemental essence. That, combined with their powerful spiritual energy, gave them a certain aura.

In addition, Yale, George, and Reynolds all belonged to ancient clans. Clearly, their refinement and aura could not be matched by the likes of most nobles in Fenlai.

"Young master Yale, welcome! And these two are?" Bernard could tell at a single glance that these two definitely weren't from any ordinary clans either.

Yale laughed calmly. "These two are my two dear bros from the Ernst Institute."

Reynolds courteously said, "Mr. Bernard, I am from the Dunstan [Deng'si'tan] clan of the O'Brien Empire. You can address me as Reynolds."

"The Dunstan clan?"

Both Bernard and Duke Bonalt were startled. Everyone present with some experience knew of the fame of the Dunstan clan. The Dunstan clan was an extremely powerful clan within the O'Brien Empire, a clan which controlled an exceedingly powerful military force.

"Young master Reynolds, our Debs clan warmly welcomes your arrival!" Bernard said excitedly.

The arrival of a young master from the Dunstan clan naturally gained a great deal of face to Bernard. Nearby, Kalan also bowed very courteously. But it was clear that the difference between him and a descendant of one of the great clans was extremely large.

"And this?" Bernard looked towards George.

George smiled. "Mr. Bernard, I come from the Walsh [Hua'shi] clan of the Yulan Empire."

"The Walsh clan?" The hearts of all the nearby nobles thumped hard. The Walsh clan was an ancient clan with thousands of years of history. In the Yulan Empire, they possessed tremendous influence, and was pretty much on the same level as the Leon clan of Dixie and Delia.

"Young master George, your arrival today brings exceptional honor to our Debs clan." Bernard was extremely humble.

Both the Walsh clan and the Dunstan clan were extremely powerful clans from the Four Great Empires. They were clans which could influence the internal strategies of their respective empires. Even before the fall, the Debs clan couldn't compare with the likes of these clans, much less the current Debs clan.

The wedding ceremony of the Debs clan was a very lively affair. Many nobles as well as many young noble ladies wanted to strike up conversations with Yale, George, and Reynolds. In the eyes of those young noble ladies, even if they abandoned the thoughts of becoming a principal wife, if they could become even just a secondary wife to one of those three, their clans would receive countless benefits.

As for the original center of attention, Kalan, much less attention was now paid to him.

But there were three people whose attentions were focused on him. Yale, Reynolds, and George.

"Look. Miss Alice and Miss Rowling have arrived." Suddenly, a voice rang out in the hall. Right now, the two female leads had appeared, dressed in beautiful wedding gowns. They entered from a side door, and Kalan immediately went to go welcome them. Very naturally, both Alice and Rowling slipped their arms around Kalan's.

At this time, Yale, Reynolds, and George finally acted.



"Haha, Kalan, these two must be your wives, right? They really are beautiful!" Reynolds was the first to laugh and walk over.

Seeing them walk over, Kalan immediately headed towards them with his two wives. "Rowling, Alice, pay your respects to these three young masters. This is young master Reynolds of the Dunstan clan, and this is..." But halfway through his words, George let out a cry of surprise, shouting out loudly, "Alice?! You're getting married to this Kalan?"

George's shout was very loud. These words caused the entire hall to fall silent.

To say something like this at someone's wedding ceremony was far too impolite.

"Right, Alice, aren't you dating our Third Bro?" Reynolds added.

It was Yale's turn to speak. "Second Bro, Fourth Bro, you two didn't know this, but this Alice has already broken up with Third Bro. She's going to get married with this Kalan now."

"She broke up with Third Bro?"

George and Reynolds both shook their heads, sighing.

Reynolds then immediately said, "Alice, since you abandoned our Third Bro to be together with this Kalan fellow, then you definitely will be his principal wife, right?" "Actually, no. The principal wife is this Miss Rowling. This was already proclaimed at the engagement ceremony." Yale immediately said.

These two sentences made Alice's face turn scarlet, while the look on Kalan's face was extremely awkward as well. But not a single person in the entire hall dared to berate Yale, Reynolds, or George for their discourtesy. Given their statuses, who would dare?

"Three young masters, we have to toast our guests. Please excuse us." Kalan forcibly suppressed the rage in his heart and spoke modestly.

"Alright." Reynolds nodded as well.

Kalan immediately led Rowling and Alice towards other tables. Yale, George, and Reynolds only coldly watched him depart. Thinking about how Linley was probably going to be executed soon, their hearts were filled with even more rage at the injustice of it all.

Suddenly...

“Bam!” “Bam!” “Bam!”

A terrifying series of sounds could be heard from outside. It was a low, somber sound that made the earth tremble with each vibration, and all of the utensils in the hall were knocked to the floor.

“What’s going on outside?” A nobleman in the hall stood up in surprise.

“Rowling, Alice, stay put.” Kalan immediately ran out of the main hall with his father, and many other nobles ran out as well. They wanted to see what exactly was going on outside, for such a huge ruckus to be caused.

Reynolds, Yale, and George also headed outside, curious.

But right at this moment...

“BAM!”

A giant foot suddenly descended from the heavens, landing directly in the front courtyard of the Debs clan’s manor. That giant foot just happened to land directly on Kalan and Bernard, who had just entered the front courtyard. The sound of bone splintering could be heard as the two of them, father and son, were immediately smashed into a meaty paste. The ground was stained with their blood.

That foot was over four meters long, and was covered with thick golden fur.

“Ah!” Many people raised their heads to stare at the monster.

This was an enormous golden-furred ape, at least twenty or thirty meters tall, the size of an eight-floor tall building. This gigantic golden ape’s eyes were like a pair of giant purple carriage wheels. The giant golden ape’s body seemed to be brimming with power, causing the very air around it to shudder.

“Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape! A Saint-level magical beast, the Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape!” Seeing this magical beast, Yale couldn’t help but stare at it, his jaw slack.

That Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape raised its head, letting out an excited howl, and spoke in the human tongue, “Haha, kill, haha, kill them for me! Kill them all! The more you kill, the greater the rewards the King will give you! Haha, kill!”

“Bam.” “Screech!”

Yale, George, and Reynolds could suddenly hear the howls and cries of magical beasts from all directions, as though the entire world had suddenly been filled with

them. Suddenly, Yale, George, and Reynolds saw that the entire sky had been filled with countless, innumerable flying magical beasts!

“Dragonhawks! These are Dragonhawks! This...” Reynolds was stunned and slackjawed as well.

From far away, an enormous flock of Dragonhawks had appeared, covering the entire sky with their presences. The density of Dragonhawks was so high that there was no way to count their number.

Suddenly, everyone felt as though the day of the apocalypse had descended upon them. Right now, no one could be bothered to grieve or feel pity for Kalan and Bernard, who had been crushed to a pulp by that giant foot of the Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape.

## Chapter 5

“What on earth is going on?”

Yale, Reynolds, and George were all stunned. Just moments ago, they were participating in a wedding banquet, but then all of a sudden, a giant Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape had dropped out of the skies, apparently with a huge host of magical beasts behind him. That incredibly supermassive flock of Dragonhawks in the sky was terrifying to behold.

Not only were the three bros stunned; all of the people within the city of Fenlai were stunned.

“Get out, now!” Yale immediately shouted.

Yale, George, and Reynolds hurriedly fled from the Debs clan’s manor. Fortunately, the Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape didn’t pay any attention to the three of them, because there were simply too many people running about in Fenlai City. Someone worthy of the Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape noticing would have to be at least a combatant of the ninth rank or a Saint-level combatant.

“Young master.” The vast majority of the guards of the Dawson Conglomerate had undergone training in the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts, and so were able to maintain their calm despite seeing that vast number of magical beasts descend upon them.

“Quick, to my father!”

Yale immediately shouted.

Escorted by the Dawson Conglomerate bodyguards, Yale, Reynolds, and George quickly rushed back to the Dawson Conglomerate's headquarters. On the way back, Yale noticed that there were a huge number of flying magical beasts already within the city of Fenlai. Not only were there Dragonhawks, there were also Winged Pegasi.

There were also magical beasts of the seventh rank such as Thunderwing Pegasi and Blue-eyed Thunderhawks, and magical beasts of the eighth rank such as Golden Sunhawks as well as various giant dragons.

Both the skies and the streets of Fenlai City were covered with massive magical beasts. The apocalypse had descended onto Fenlai City, and there was no way to fend it off. Even the weakest of the giant flying dragons was a magical beast of the eighth rank. Over a hundred giant flying dragons had come to attack. Who could stop them?

Even the Eight Ace Regiments of the Radiant Temple would see their numbers cut in half from a single combined fiery blast from those hundred plus dragons.

"Apocalypse. Apocalypse!"

The entire Fenlai City had already sunken into a mass of fires and floods. But the dwellers of Fenlai City didn't know that these magical beasts made up only a fraction of the total number coming...because the magical beasts on the ground far outnumbered the flying beasts. But in terms of speed, of course the flying magical beasts were much faster and had arrived first.

Thus, the flying magical beasts had led the attack as the vanguard.

....

The soldiers standing on the walls of Fenlai City were all stunned. This was the 10000th anniversary of the Yulan Festival. Just earlier, during lunch, they had all celebrated by drinking alcohol, but now, all they could see were endless numbers of magical beasts. And in front of them...

"Magical beasts. So many. So many." Those soldiers were all speechless.

The earth was shaking. Outside the city of Fenlai, an army of hundreds of thousands of Windwolves were charging towards the city at high speed. Just the very sight of those hundreds of thousands of Windwolves charging at them in masse was enough to freeze the blood of the watchers.

“Where are the magi?! Magi!”

“Magicannons! Load the magicannons!”

The army officers all began shouting loudly, trying to do their best to get their soldiers ready. In reality, they also knew that struggling was hopeless, because a huge number of winged magical beasts had already descended within the heart of Fenlai City.

“Captain, what is that?” Suddenly, a soldier stared speechlessly at the skies.

The captain looked in that direction as well, and saw that up in the air, there was an enormous magical beast that was speeding towards them. This magical beast had no wings at all, but it sliced through the air as it flew towards them at astonishing speed.

“Flying in the air. This is...this is a Saint-level magical beast. A Saint-level magical beast!”

That captain now understood that there really was no chance at all.

“Groaaaaaaaaaaaaaawr!”

At the same time, far away from Fenlai City, a terrifying roar could be heard. A huge form passed through the horde of Windwolves at high speed, moving so fast that it was at least ten times speedier than the Windwolves. It probably wasn't much slower than the Saint-level beast flying in the air.

This was an enormous beast, at least thirty meters tall. Physically, it looked exactly like an enormous lion, except its eyes were bloody red!

A magus on the walls of Fenlai City screamed, “Saint-level magical beast, Bloody-eyed Maned Lion! Heavens, another Saint-level magical beast! It's a Bloody-eyed Maned Lion! Amongst behemoth-type monsters, only the Golden Behemoth is a match for it!”

Everyone was stunned.

There was no way they could match it in power.

“Haha! Bloody, why are you, a Saint-level magical beast, running on the ground?” The giant beast flying in the air spoke with words that sounded like booming thunder.

Quite a few soldiers below raised their heads to look up.

“It’s speaking in human tongues! So it’s true that Saint-level magical beasts can speak in human tongues!” This was the first time anyone present had ever personally encountered a Saint-level magical beast, much less two of them! By now, they could tell what the magical beast in the air looked like.

The body of Saint-level magical beast above was obsidian black, and it looked like a dragon, but without wings.

“Saint-level magical beast, Tyrant Wyrms! A hegemon amongst dragons!” Another magus cried out in terror.

Dragons were primarily divided into two types. The first type was the winged dragons, such as the eighth-ranked Emerald Dragons and Fire Dragons, or the ninth-ranked Silver Dragons, Black Dragons, and Frost Dragons, or the Saint-level Gold Dragons, Prismatic Dragons, and Bloodgem Dragons.

The other type was the wingless dragons, such as the seventh-ranked Velocidragons, the ninth ranked Armored Razorback Wyrms and Stegowyrms, or the Saint-level Thunder Lizards, Tyrant Wyrms, and Triceratops Wyrms.

The main difference between winged dragons and wingless dragons lay in the power of their bodies.

The wingless dragons possessed immense power within their bodies. The Armored Razorback Wyrms, the Stegowyrms, the Thunder Lizards, and the Tyrant Wyrms all possessed incredibly durable bodies that were somewhat stronger than winged dragons of the same rank.

“Hmph, enough chitchat. Let’s compete and see who can kill the most.” The Bloody-eyed Maned Lion’s terrible voice growled out, shaking the earth with its echoes.

“Fine!” The Tyrant Wurm roared in response.

Instantly, that enormous, hundred-meter plus body of the Tyrant Wurm descended from the heavens, aiming directly at the city walls. The walls of Fenlai City were extremely sturdy, and were covered with countless powerful magical formations. But because there were too many flying magical beasts present, there was no way to activate the magical barriers without interference.

“Do you think you can run faster than me?” The Bloody-eyed Maned Lion roared angrily as well, increase its speed still further.

These two terrifying massive beasts charged towards the city, one from the air, another from the ground. The walls protecting Fenlai City were over ten meters

thick. Walls that thick were definitely capable of defending against enemy armies, but facing two such terrifying magical beasts...

After all, Tyrant Wyrms and Bloody-eyed Maned Lions could only be matched by peak-stage Saint-level human combatants!

“Bam!”

At virtually the exact same instant, the Tyrant Worm and the Bloody-eyed Maned Lion slammed into the wall. Under the attack of these two Saint-level massive magical beasts, the ten-meter thick wall was only able to serve as a slight, momentary impediment. And then, in the next heartbeat, the section of the walls blocking them collapsed entirely.

“Boom!”

Those two parts of the wall exploded, sending rubble flying everywhere. The rubble alone killed many people.

“Growwwwwwr!”

The Bloody-eyed Maned Lion and the Tyrant Wurm excitedly charged towards the heart of Fenlai City. Given their astonishing speed, most people would totally be unable to dodge out of the way of their charge. Their massive weight and the force of each step would most likely heavily injure even a warrior of the ninth rank. A warrior of the eighth rank would die from being stepped on, no question at all.

“Hooooowl!”

Hundreds of thousands of Windwolves charged forward, like the boundless waves of the sea, charging through the openings created by the two Saint-level magical beasts. Other Windwolves just leapt directly into the air, bypassing the wall entirely. Windwolves possessed incredible leaping abilities, after all, and were able to leap 20-30 meters in a bound. These walls were totally useless in stopping them.

Hundreds of thousands of Windwolves had entered Fenlai City...

“Rumble, rumble, rumble.”

The earth continued to shake with thunder-like galloping sounds. Behind the Windwolves were countless numbers of different types of land-based magical creatures. There were Mastodons and other creatures far more terrifying than Windwolves. Those soldiers who had been lucky enough to survive, staring at that massive flood of magical beasts, knew true despair.

"The Holy Capital is finished." Staring off at into the distance, a soldier hiding in a corner of the walls said in despair.

"Crunch."

A Windwolf suddenly appeared next to him and bit his head off in a single bite.

.....

A cell in the ninth floor of the Radiant Temple.

"What is going on?" Linley climbed to his feet. He could feel the ground shaking and hear the thunderous roars, howls, as well as screams of misery from outside. Having stayed so long within the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts, Linley could tell just from listening to the sounds what sorts of magical beasts had arrived.

"Why are there so many magical beasts here? They seem to be everywhere." Linley was totally amazed.

"Boom!"

A terrifyingly powerful force struck against the Radiant Temple. All the walls of the Radiant Temple suddenly began to glow with a dim light. Despite having received such a tremendous blow, the Radiant Temple had managed to withstand it.

"This Radiant Temple's defense is really something." A deep, thick voice growled from outside. The power and strength of that voice was such that even in his cell, Linley could clearly hear each word.

"Someone is attacking the Radiant Temple?"

Linley found it somewhat hard to believe. The Holy Union was one of the six major powers, and the Radiant Church had existed for millennia. In all that time, no one had ever dared to attack the Radiant Temple. But given the attack just then, as well as that loud voice, someone had definitely just attacked the Radiant Temple.

"KING!"

Suddenly, in unison, several rough voices rang out loudly. There was definitely more than one loud voice!

"Stop!" An angry bellow.

"That's the Holy Emperor." Linley could clearly tell it was him, but right after the Holy Emperor's voice rang out, there was a....



“BAM!”

A terrifyingly powerful force descended upon the Radiant Temple, causing the entire Radiant Temple to shake violently. The light shining from the myriad complicated magical patterns covering the Radiant Temple began to flicker and shudder, while on the walls of the Temple, cracks began to emerge.

“How terrifying.” Doehring Cowart sighed in amazement. “A single attack was enough to nearly collapse the entire Radiant Temple.”

“BAM!”

Yet another terrifying strike. This time, even the giant magical formation covering the Radiant Temple, the Glory of the Radiant Sovereign, wasn’t able to withstand it. With an exploding sound, the Radiant Temple split open at the middle, and the top eight floors of the Radiant Temple collapsed.

“The protective magical formation was destroyed.” Linley could feel his cell beginning to shift about, as if it were sliding down.

Linley was both amazed and overjoyed. Before this, the cell walls were extremely sturdy, because any force used against it would be absorbed by the entire magical formation. But now, the magical formation itself had been destroyed! Linley’s hands transformed into a pair of draconic claws, and he immediately smashed a giant hole into the walls with five or six punches.

Linley immediately burst out from within the hole he had just created.

“Bloodviolet Godsword!” When Linley had been seized, the Bloodviolet Godsword had been taken from him by the Radiant Church. But since the Bloodviolet Godsword had already been personalized and bound by Linley long ago, with a mental command by Linley, it began to fly towards his direction, arriving in Linley’s hands shortly afterwards.

By now, the Radiant Temple was in a state of chaos. No one could be bothered to worry about Linley.

With a tap of the foot, Linley sent himself leaping down into the plaza below. Right now, the Radiant Temple Plaza was littered with corpses. Far too many had just died. There were many people engaged in battle against magical beasts as well.

“So many people.”

Linley was totally stunned.

The skies were filled with countless types of flying magical beasts – Dragonhawks, Bluewind Hawks, Winged Pegasi, Thunderwing Pegasi, Emerald Dragons, Fire Dragons, Black Dragons...all sorts of dragons. The sight of these creatures blocking out the sky with their mass was enough to freeze anyone's heart.

And the numbers of magical beasts on the ground were even more astonishing.

"Is that...?"

Linley stared in the direction of the Radiant Temple. In the air directly above it, there were over ten enormous magical beasts.

"A Savage Worldbear...Bloody-eyed Maned Lion...Electrobolt Panther...Thunderwing White Tiger...Thunder Lizard...Tyrant Wyrms..." Linley saw one legendary Saint-level magical beast after another, all hovering in the air above the Radiant Temple. He was totally stupefied at the number of Saint-level magical beasts that had just appeared.

What's more, the person leading these Saint-level magical beasts seemed to be a human.

He was a very devilish looking young man, wearing a dim gold robe, with a strange slit-like scar on his forehead. This devilish young man was coldly, calmly looking at Heidens and Heidens' forces. Heidens, Mr. Fallen Leaf, and five other Saint-level human combatants were all standing in mid-air, staring back at the young man. Clearly, the Radiant Church's side was in very bad shape.

"You..." Heidens and the other humans were furious.

"I really am so sorry for disturbing you on your Yulan Festival, but I must inform you that your Radiant Church needs to go find another place to be your Holy Capital." The devilish young man said calmly.

Linley could clearly hear these words, and he couldn't help but be secretly shocked at how terrifying this young man was.

"Boss, boss!" Linley suddenly heard Bebe's voice ringing out in his mind. Linley could sense Bebe's location, and he couldn't help but turn to look at him. He saw a black blur pass through the massed throngs of people and magical beasts. Very shortly afterwards, the blur arrived, and with a leap it threw itself directly into Linley's arms.

"Bebe." Linley felt extremely moved.

“Boss.” In Linley’s arms, Bebe was also so moved that his little eyes turned moist.

## Chapter 6

There were magical beasts both inside and outside of Fenlai City. Countless numbers of magical beasts. This city which had just been celebrating the 10000th Yulan Festival now found itself having run into the day of Apocalypse. Deaths were happening constantly, and the population of this Holy Capital, Fenlai City, was dropping at a terrifying rate.

Both the higher ups of the Radiant Temple as well as the commoners were all fleeing for their lives from the magical beasts.

“Quick, quick, stop dawdling!”

Duke Bonalt roared furiously. Right now, Duke Bonalt didn’t give a damn about his ‘king’. He only led his own family out of his Duke’s manor, along with ten of his most powerful guards, immediately fleeing towards the outside of the city. The only thing he had on him was a few magicrystal cards.

They were fleeing for their lives!

“Father, let’s go rescue Nessa [Ni’sha],” pleaded Duke Bonalt’s son Albert [Ai’bo’tē].

“You bastard, if you want to live, then follow me!” Duke Bonalt howled furiously.  
“Let’s go!”

Duke Bonalt paid no more attention to his son, and immediately led his wife and his other children out. As for Albert, he hesitated there for a moment, then ground his teeth and pulled out his sword as he ran in the other direction.

“You ungrateful whelp!” Duke Bonalt swore, but in his heart, he was extremely grieved.

But Duke Bonalt knew very well that right now, Fenlai City was covered with magical beasts. Magical beasts of the seventh rank could appear at any time, and even magical beasts of the eighth rank and ninth rank were not rare. Right now, if they didn’t immediately flee the city, they wouldn’t have a chance at surviving.

“Son, forgive your father.” Duke Bonalt said to himself, while at the same time, he shouted at his guardsmen. “Quick, let’s leave Fenlai City! Once we’ve reached safety,

each person will receive 30,000 gold coins!" At a time like this, Duke Bonalt was not going to be stingy.

"Yes, Lord Duke!" The guardsmen exulted. 30,000 gold coins was more than enough for them to live out their lives carefree.

But after travelling just two or three kilometers, they had already encountered and killed two magical beasts of the seventh rank, five magical beasts of the sixth rank, and three magical beasts of the fifth rank.

"Groooooowl!"

A ten-meter high black bear began to run at them from high speed from far away, each step causing the earth to shake. Seeing the black bear, all of the faces of the guardsmen turned white, and Duke Bonalt shouted loudly, "Quickly, flee! That's a Violet Tattooed Bear! Quickly!"

An adult Violet Tattooed Bear was generally a magical beast of the ninth rank.

The Saint-level Violet Tattooed Bear which Linley had encountered in the Foggy Valley within the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts was a particularly strong representative of its kind.

"Groooooowl!" The Violet Tattooed Bear clearly had its eyes set on Duke Bonalt's group, and it continued running towards them, causing both the earth and the hearts of Duke Bonalt's group to shake. The Violet Tattooed Bear was running in a totally direct line towards them. Anything which got in its way was smashed.

"Bam!" With a wave of its arm, a three story high building was disintegrated, showering Duke Bonalt's group with rubble.

"Smash!" A piece of rubble nearly half the size of a man came smashing down on one of the young daughters of Duke Bonalt. The pretty, delicate head of that girl was instantly transformed into a pile of mud-like meat paste, as blood and brain matter splattered across the stone and across the ground.

Duke Bonalt and his men didn't even have the chance to be angry or to be heartbroken, because immediately afterwards, the Violet Tattooed Bear slammed down its huge paws upon one of the guards, turning him into nothing more than ground meat.

"Ah!" Duke Bonalt suddenly realized that a giant foot was coming for him, and he frantically tried to roll away.

“WHAP!”

The Violet Tattooed Bear stepped on Duke Bonalt, killing him on the spot. If someone as weak as Duke Bonalt would have been able to avoid the attack of a Violet Tattooed Bear, then the Violet Tattooed Bear wouldn't have been worthy of being classified as a magical beast of the ninth rank.

“Grooooooowl!” The Violet Tattooed Bear raised its head and roared, beating its chest with excitement, before turning and heading in a different direction to find more prey.

.....

Crushed to death. Swiped to death. Slapped to death. Bitten to death. This was extremely common and normal, now. Regardless of whether they were nobles or commoners, right now in Fenlai City, life was a very fragile thing. And so, one noble and commoner after another died.

Fenlai City was a scene of utter catastrophe.

And the place where the slaughter was the most ferocious...was the area around the Radiant Temple.

On the massive plaza in front of the Radiant Temple, the mighty Knights of the Radiant Temple as well as the Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal were engaged in ferocious battle against the magical beasts. The defense here was the stiffest, and so even more magical beasts congregated here as well.

Linley and Bebe were in a corner of the Radiant Temple Plaza, but the two of them were very safe. This was because, given their current strength, they had nothing to fear as long as a Saint-level combatant didn't come attack them.

And right now, all the Saint-level combatants were in the skies above the Radiant Temple.

“Boss, there's so many Saint-level magical beasts.” Bebe's voice rang out in Linley's mind.

Linley looked up again at the Saint-level magical beasts in the air above the Radiant Temple. Linley hadn't expected that at a critical moment such as this, the Radiant Church was able to mobilize seven Saint-level combatants within Fenlai City.

“The Saint-level combatants which the Radiant Church officially acknowledges having can be counted on one hand. In truth, it has many powerful combatants lying

hidden. This is just the Holy Capital, yet they already have seven Saint-level combatants. Most likely the total number of Saint-level combatants within the Holy Union is a good deal higher.”

Linley finally had an idea of what the highest levels of power within the continent were like.

The aura of a Saint-level combatant was enough to cause dread in lesser individuals. Any of the seven Saint-level humans in the air above could easily kill Linley, as though Linley were nothing but an ant. But right now, those seven Saint-level humans were at a definite disadvantage!

Magical beasts were naturally more powerful than humans.

For ordinary magical beasts, immediately upon reaching the Saint-level, despite being early-stage Saint-level magical beasts, generally only middle-stage Saint-level human combatants would be a match for them. For those particularly powerful magical beasts which reached the Saint-level, such as an Armored Razorback Wyrms, or a Tyrant Wyrms, or a Nine-Headed Serpent Emperor...immediately upon reaching the Saint-level, they could only be matched by a peak-stage human Saint-level combatant.

And right now...

Over ten Saint-level magical beasts stood in mid-air, and amongst them were a Bloody-eyed Maned Lion, a Tyrant Wyrms, a Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape, and other incredibly strong Saint-level magical beasts. Any one of them was capable of fighting with the Holy Emperor head to head.

What was even more amazing was that in front of these magical beasts, there was that devilish ‘young man’.

“Are you a human, or are you...?” Heidens stared at that devilish young man.

The devilish young man glanced coldly at Heidens. “A human? How could I be a pathetic human? Humans are nothing more than food to us magical beasts!” The devilish young man’s words were loaded with absolute contempt. Even when looking at Heidens, he was filled with nothing but utter contempt.

“Haha, if our almighty King wished to kill you, it would be as easy as flipping over his hands. He’s giving you guys face. You’d best accept it. Haha...” That Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape shouted loudly with laughter.

The expression on Heidens' face changed dramatically, and so did the faces of the six Saint-level combatants behind him.

A magical beast that could take human form. What sort of power was this?

"Could it be that yet another Deity-level combatant has appeared on the Yulan continent? An invincible entity?" Heidens felt extremely sour. In the past, there had only been three individuals who had stood at the very peak of power in the Yulan continent; the 'War God' of the O'Brien Empire, the 'High Priest' of the Yulan Empire, and the 'King' of the Forest of Darkness.

Heidens didn't imagine that the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts would suddenly produce its own 'King', who was able to take human form as well.

"Broke through the Saint-level to reach the Deity-level. A Deity-level magical beast. This..." Heidens knew very well how terrifying a Deity-level magical beast was. To this 'King', killing these seven human Saint-level combatants would be like child's play.

Heidens instantly made his decision...

They had to retreat!

Right now, preserving as much power as remained to the Radiant Church was the most important thing of all. If it lost seven Saint-level combatants, the Radiant Church's power would drop by at least a large half, and its status would drop as well.

"A Deity-level magical beast. How could a Deity-level magical beast appear out of nowhere?" Heidens cursed to himself. He had no idea that this Deity-level magical beast had been accidentally released by Linley from within the Foggy Valley. And as it just so happened, when this Deity-level magical beast had implemented the plan he had been formulating for over half a year, he had accidentally saved Linley.

Fate truly was a strange thing.

"Mighty King of Magical Beasts, I am the Holy Emperor Heidens. Might I ask what you wish of me?" Heidens decided to submit.

The devilish young man smiled and nodded. "Your name is Heidens? Very well. What you need to do is lead your people and flee to the north. The magical beasts of my Mountain Range of Magical Beasts will also continue to expand to the north. When the day comes that my magical beasts feel they have enough territory, they will stop expanding."

Heidens' heart was filled with fury.

What sort of offer was this?

When they felt they had enough territory, they would stop expanding?

"Hmph, don't worry. We won't take over all of the territory belonging to your Holy Union. At most, we'll take half. Right...as of right now, the Holy Capital of the Cult of Shadows has been destroyed by us as well." The devilish young man said casually.

"The Holy Capital of the Cult of Shadows?" Heidens and the other six Saint-level combatants were all startled.

Could it be that the magical beasts of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts had launched simultaneous attacks against both the Radiant Church as well as the Cult of Shadows? This was too insane! They knew that the magical beasts in the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts were quite numerous, and there were quite a few Saint-level magical beasts there as well. But they hadn't imagined there would be enough to launch simultaneous assaults against two major powers.

"You can beat it now. Oh, and there's one more thing I can tell you. My name...is Dylin [Di'lin]." The devilish young man said casually.

Hearing the conversation going on up above, Linley was totally stunned. Clearly, this horde of magical beasts wasn't just attacking Fenlai City; it was attacking the entirety of both the Holy Union and the Dark Alliance. And judging from what the devilish young man was saying...

They intended to take over half of the territory of both the Holy Union and the Dark Alliance!

"Then it seems the twelve kingdoms and thirty two duchies to the west of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts are going to plunge into disaster." Linley felt terrified.

"The King of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts, Dylin?"

Linley firmly imprinted this name, 'Dylin', into his memory. After having quietly listened for a while, Linley stealthily made his way through the crowds and departed, heading to his own residence at high speed. This was because he had left a number of things back at his manor.

"Hoooowl!" A powerfully built Windwolf noticed Linley and immediately lunged at him.



“Swish!”

A flash of violet light. Linley didn’t even pause or slow down, but that powerful Windwolf suddenly split in half, staining the ground with its blood. On the road back to his manor, Linley saw that the streets had become avenues of death and destruction. There were magical beasts everywhere.

But by the time Linley reached the intersection between the Fragrant Pavilion Road and the Greenleaf Road, Linley saw a squad of troops numbering thirty-something strong. Wherever this squad went, the magical beasts were unable to block them.

“Boss Yale?”

Linley suddenly saw that Yale was bound on the back of a powerful warhorse. “Second Bro and Fourth Bro are here as well. Only, they are riding their horses.”

“Father, let me go, let me go! Let me go save Third Bro! The Radiant Temple has already been demolished. This is our best chance to save him!” Tied up and bound, Yale continued to shout loudly from his position on the back of the warhorse. The person actually riding the warhorse was an extremely powerful looking red-haired man.

The feeling he gave Linley was that he wasn’t weaker than Kaiser at all.

“Shut your mouth.” Riding in the center of this convoy was an extremely fat man, who was wielding a giant battleaxe in his hands. It danced like a vicious blur in his hands, clearly possessing tremendous power.

“Father? Is that the Chairman of the Dawson Conglomerate?” Linley secretly mused.

With a few leaps, Linley reached the convoy in seconds.

“Boss Yale, Reynolds, George!” Linley shouted loudly.

Yale, who was in the middle of shouting, was startled, and he couldn’t help but turn to look. Reynolds and George, who had been maintaining their silence while riding, turned to look as well. Seeing the blood-splattered Linley, and that familiar-looking little Shadowmouse, Bebe, on his shoulders, the eyes of all three of them turned instantly red.

“Third Bro!”

All three of them cried out in joyful unison.

## Chapter 7

When the Chairman of the Dawson Conglomerate, Monroe Dawson, saw what was going on, he immediately ordered, "Halt!"

In unison, all of the riders immediately pulled sharply on their horses' reins. The horses rose high in the air on their hooves, then came down and halted.

"Release the young master." Monroe Dawson instructed. The red-haired warrior of the ninth rank in charge of Yale's protection and escort waved his hands, and the ropes covering Yale instantly split apart. Yale immediately jumped down from the horse. As for George and Reynolds, they had jumped down long ago already.

"Third Bro, are you okay?" Reynolds was so excited that his eyes were red.

"Third Bro, this is wonderful! I knew you would be fine!" Yale said excitedly.

George didn't say anything at all, just thumping Linley on the chest.

"Third Bro, let's go. Leave Fenlai City with us." Yale immediately said, and Monroe Dawson also spoke out now. "This would be Linley, right? Come along with us. As long as we aren't attacked by a Saint-level combatant, our safety should not be a problem at all."

Monroe Dawson desired very much to have Linley be a member of the Dawson Conglomerate.

What the Dawson Conglomerate lacked the most was Saint-level combatants!

"No need. I have some affairs to settle. Boss Yale, Second Bro, Fourth Bro, you leave first." Linley shook his head.

"Third Bro, are you actually going to...?" Yale shouted in shock. Yale already guessed at what Linley was planning.

Linley nodded. "Right."

Clayde. Had to die!

Last time, he failed because of the Saint-level Fateguard, but Linley believed that, given it was already extremely rare for a ruler of a kingdom to possess a single Fateguard, there was no way that Clayde could be in possession of a second one. Right now, the Saint-level combatants of the Radiant Temple were all focused on

saving their own skins. It was highly unlikely that they would care about protecting a king at this point.

“Boss Yale, you can leave now. I’ll go find you all later.” Linley said.

“There’s too many magical beasts here this time. I’m afraid that the Ernst Institute is going to be attacked as well, given its proximity to Fenlai City. We won’t be heading back to the Institute. After reaching a safe location, both Reynolds and George plan to go back to their own empires. As for me...I’ll follow my father for now.” Yale replied. George and Reynolds both nodded.

“Good. Then in the future, I’ll go looking for you all. Boss Yale. Second Bro. Fourth Bro. Farewell.” Linley stared longingly at his three good bros, nodded heavily a single time, then turned and leapt in the opposite direction at high speed, travelling over a hundred meters in three steps.

Yale, Reynolds, and George all understood that seeing this Third Bro of theirs again in the future would be quite difficult.

The three of them immediately mounted their horses. “Go!”

The Dawson Conglomerate’s convoy headed out once more.

This day, countless clans within the city of Fenlai were on the brink of annihilation, and the Debs clan was no exception. The clan leader, Bernard, had been crushed to death by the Violet-Eyed Goldfur Ape’s foot, along with the successor, Kalan. The other clan members didn’t have any time to consider who the next clan leader should be, because immediately afterwards, they suffered an even greater loss. Magical beasts began attacking the Debs clan’s manor.

Guards, servants, maids, clan members...they all died, one after the other. The people of the Debs clan all went wild, grabbing what valuables they could get their hands on and fleeing in all directions. By now, nobody would think about helping others.

“Big sister Alice, what should we do?” Rowling was stunned.

Alice was stunned at first as well, but now she recovered. “Come with me.” Alice immediately shouted. Alice was a magus of the fourth rank, after all, while Rowling was a warrior of the fourth rank. Considering their ages, this was actually quite impressive. But in a situation where magical beasts of the fifth rank were everywhere, they didn’t have the ability to resist at all.

Leading Rowling, Alice rushed into Kalan's room and grabbed two magicrystal cards from a drawer.

"Little sister Rowling, each of these two magicrystal cards have a hundred thousand gold coins in them. They'll be enough for us to survive on. We can go now." Alice handed Rowling one of the magicrystal cards, then they rushed out of the manor together. One of them was a magus, the other was a warrior.

They were in fairly good physical condition, and were able to run quite agilely.

"Save me! Ah!"

A maid frantically ran past Alice and Rowling, while behind her a Windwolf was in hot pursuit. The Windwolf viciously charged directly to her, then snapped directly at her throat. Staring at Alice and Rowling, the maid's eyes were filled with the desire to keep living. But then, her eyes grew dim and faded.

Rowling stood there, staring stupidly at the spectacle.

"Hurry, let's go!"

Alice pulled at Rowling's hands. To try and be benevolent right now was to court certain death. Right now, even combatants of the ninth rank didn't dare to be too self-sacrificing, much less them. In the city of Fenlai, there was currently more than ten Saint-level combatants, and nearly a hundred magical beasts of the ninth rank.

The lower ranked magical beasts were even more plentiful, especially the fifth and sixth ranked magical beasts such as the horde of Windwolves, which numbered in the hundreds of thousands alone. There were only a million or so denizens in Fenlai City to begin with, and most of them only possessed strength at the first or second rank. They had no chance of fighting back.

"Rip!" Alice and Rowling, these two weak girls, ripped off the dress part of their wedding gowns, so as to allow themselves to run faster.

"Big sister Alice, there are magical beasts up ahead." Rowling suddenly called out.

"This way." Alice pulled Rowling by the hand, rushing towards a small alleyway.

But after crossing through the alleyway, they saw that the other side also had magical beasts. Alice and Rowling were forced to stay in the middle of the alley, between two manors. But suddenly, from the other side of the alley, a Vampiric Iron Bull charged towards them.

"Let's go!" Alice pulled strongly at Rowling's hands, and they rushed out of the alleyway. They ignored the magical beasts up ahead. There were many people up ahead as well, after all. Those magical beasts might not necessarily target the two of them. They continued to charge forward as frantically as they could.

Their breaths were hoarse and ragged. This life and death juncture had increased their anxiety to the highest level.

"Howl!" "Howl!" Suddenly, from behind them, over ten Windwolves suddenly charged forward at high speed. Windwolves were simply too fast, possessing more than double the speed of Alice and Rowling. Very soon, the ten Windwolves would catch up to them...and at the same time, up in front of Alice and Rowling, an enormous Landwyrn appeared.

The Landwyrn was large enough that just by standing there, it blocked off almost half of the Greenleaf Road. And with that draconic tail...there was nowhere for Alice and Rowling to flee.

"Big sister Alice..." Rowling felt somewhat hopeless.

Alice looked at that enormous, two-story tall Landwyrn, then at the ravening pack of Windwolves charging in their direction. She couldn't think of any way to escape at all.

"Am I going to die?" Alice couldn't help but tightly embrace Rowling. At this moment, she too felt that all hope was lost. From behind, the ten Windwolves were about to arrive, their white fangs gleaming with a cold light...

A beautiful flash of violet light.

The heads of the ten Windwolves instantly flew apart. A human figure descended from the heavens, then charged directly towards that enormous Landwyrn.

"That is..." Alice and Rowling stared stupidly at the person who had suddenly saved them.

Alice could clearly see who it was.

"A long, long time ago, something like this happened as well." A lost look in her eyes, Alice stared at that figure. It was Linley. In truth, Linley's own residence was located right across the street from the Debs clan's manor, and right now, Alice and Rowling were only a few dozen meters away from Linley's manor.

Linley wouldn't just watch someone die without helping, after all.

“Haaaargh!”

Twisting his waist, Linley applied power to his legs, kicking out forcefully like the snapping of a whip. Like an iron whip, Linley’s leg snapped out, piercing through the air with a shriek as it landed against the skull of the Landwurm.

And as this was happening, Linley’s legs suddenly became covered with black scales.

Demidragon form!

“Bam!”

This kick was simply too fast. Caught offguard, the Landwurm was unable to react, and its skull exploded from the force of this blow. The enormous body of the Landwurm collapsed, slumping to the ground.

Linley landed on the ground. Rowling and Alice, watching all of this, were somewhat stunned.

“Big...big brother Linley...” Alice said softly.

Linley turned to look at them, a frown appearing on his face. Linley didn’t have the spare time to lead these two girls around, but if Alice and Rowling were to be here by themselves, they would definitely die. But then, Linley suddenly saw a squad of knights charge over at high speed. Within this squad of knights was an old man riding a handsome stallion. It was Managing Director Maia of the Proulx Gallery.

Under this assault by the magical beasts, the collections within the Proulx Gallery were essentially finished. Director Maia was only able to collect the most important pieces within his interspatial ring of holding.

These interspatial rings were extremely valuable and rare. Even Director Maia only had one because his clan had passed one down.

“Director Maia.” Linley shouted loudly.

Seeing Linley, Director Maia was extremely excited. “Master Linley, you are here!” The people Director Maia admired the most were those master-level sculptors, so naturally, Director Maia greatly admired Linley, this young man who was able to so easily carve out a sculpture that was almost on the same level as Proulx and Hope Jensen.

There were actually very few people who knew about Linley's attempted assassination of King Clayde. In the outside world, the story was that a demon had attempted to kill King Clayde. Naturally, Director Maia didn't know the truth.

"Master Linley, come along with us." Director Maia was very confident.

The martial force of the Proulx Gallery was quite high. As long as they weren't attacked by a Saint-level magical beast, they definitely wouldn't find surviving to be a problem.

"Director Maia, no need. But I hope you can help me. These two girls have some ties to me, and I hope you can take them to a safe location." Linley instructed.

"No problem. But Master Linley, Fenlai City is not safe right now." Director Maia hurriedly said.

"No need. I have affairs to settle. I entrust these two girls to you." After he spoke, Linley immediately disappeared into his manor. Alice and Rowling exchanged glances, and then immediately were ordered by Director Maia to mount a horse and integrate into the convoy.

"He...actually didn't say a single word to me." Alice suddenly felt a little heartsick.

The sound of hoof steps unabated. Director Maia's convoy, along with Alice and Rowling, departed.

Only now did Linley emerge from his manor, bearing a black parcel on his shoulders. This parcel contained several magicrystal cards, some of the remaining Bloodrupture poison powder, and Blueheart Grass.

"Bebe, now we head to the palace."

"Boss, let's go have ourselves a slaughter." Bebe was excited as well.

Linley immediately led Bebe and moved at high speed towards the palace.

Quite a few people had already fled, but Clayde had gone into the royal treasury instead. How could Clayde abandon the riches of the royal clan which had been accumulated for countless years? The wealth of a royal clan was an incredibly large figure.

The Debs clan, at its prime, was worth perhaps a hundred million gold coins.

But a corrupt major official such as Duke Patterson had also managed to accumulate around a hundred million gold coins. As for the wealth stored within the palace treasury, that was worth far more.

Within the treasury.

“This is the wealth that has been accumulated by countless generations of rulers of Fenlai over thousands of years.” Staring at the treasures within the treasury, Clayde didn’t have too much time to ponder. He grabbed the most valuable items and directly absorbed them into his interspatial ring. As a king, Clayde had been lucky enough to procure an interspatial ring as well.

“And these 32 magicrystal cards.” Clayde looked at the magicrystal cards in his hands.

These 32 magicrystal cards were all un-bound, and they represented thousands of years of wealth that had been accumulated by the kingdom. Each card contained within it a hundred million gold coins. The 32 magicrystal cards, in total, represented a wealth of 3.2 billion gold coins. This was a terrifying sum. Perhaps even some of the major clans of the Four Great Empires didn’t have such a large sum of gold.

A popular saying was that the easiest way to make money was to become a king. The wealth that had been accumulated by kings over thousands of years was naturally astonishingly high.

“The capital, Fenlai City, is finished.” Clayde turned to give the remaining treasures one last look, then ground his teeth and left.

But what Clayde didn’t realize yet was that it wasn’t just the capital which was finished. The entire Kingdom of Fenlai had now become the territory of magical beasts! He, Clayde, was no longer a king! What’s more, it wasn’t just the Kingdom of Fenlai that had been destroyed; a huge amount of the territory belonging to the Holy Union was being rapidly devoured and claimed by magical beasts.

## Chapter 8

In a secluded courtyard within the palace, the most important members of the royal clan of Fenlai were gathered, including Clayde, his wives, and his many children.

“The entire city of Fenlai is swarming with magical beasts. We definitely cannot all travel together in a large group, as that would attract some extremely powerful



magical beasts.” Clayde said solemnly. This reasoning was something everyone understood, and was the reason why Director Maia and Menlo Dawson were travelling in small convoys.

Convoys of a few dozen people were everywhere in Fenlai City, and weren’t remarkable at all.

But a convoy of several hundred people would draw the attention of magical beasts of the ninth rank, and perhaps even result in an attack from a Saint-level magical beast.

The most dangerous thing one could do right now was to attract attention from magical beasts.

“Carre [Ka’lei], you and your mother shall lead a division of the Wildthunder squad soldiers. Here are five un-imprinted magiccrystal cards. Remember, this represents thousands of years of accumulated wealth of our clan!” Clayde looked solemnly at his son.

There were too many people in the royal clan. They had to go in separate packs.

Clayde didn’t want for his clan to be annihilated. By going in separate packs, the chances of at least some surviving would be greater.

“Yes, father.” Carre was overjoyed.

Thousands of years of accumulated wealth...how much would that be worth?

“Shaq [Sha’ke], you, your mother, and your younger sister will also lead a division of the Wildthunder squad soldiers. Here are five magiccrystal cards for you as well.” Clayde withdrew another five magiccrystal cards and handed them to his second son. Both of the princes were extremely excited.

Clayde’s face was very solemn. He said, “The elite soldiers of our clan will be divided into these three divisions. Carre’s, Shaq’s, and my own. No matter who manages to survive in the end, at least our clan will continue. Enough, let’s head out!”

“Kaiser, as the instructor for the Wildthunder Regiment, you will come with me.” Clayde looked at Kaiser.

“Yes, your Majesty.” Kaiser nodded.

The Wildthunder Regiment was the most powerful defensive regiment within the Kingdom of Fenlai. The entire regiment, including Kaiser, only consisted of a

hundred people, giving each squad only 33 soldiers. But although they were small in number, they were high in quality. Even the weakest member of this regiment was a warrior of the seventh rank.

Divided into three squads, the royal clan immediately began to flee in three separate directions.

....

"Swish!" Linley leapt up at a high speed. At the same time, there was a violet flash of light, and the Thunderwing Pegasus that was harassing Linley suddenly split into two halves. Linley continued to run forward, making his way towards the palace at high speed.

On the way, he passed by far too many human and magical beast corpses.

"Arrived at the palace." Linley was leaping forward so fast that his body was naught but a blur, and with each movement, he travelled dozens of meters. This sort of astonishing speed made it impossible for magical beasts of the fifth and sixth ranks to stop him.

"Whew."

Linley easily leapt up over ten meters in the air, flipping into the interior of the palace.

"Roaaaar!" The sound of magical beasts roaring could be heard from within, as well as the battle cries of soldiers. Right now, there were no longer any guards at the palace gates. The only things present were corpses, blood, and rent flesh. And, occasionally, a massive corpse of a magical beast.

Like an agile treecat, Linley leapt his way through the tops of the various palace buildings.

But when Linley arrived on top of one particular roof, he suddenly saw a mounted squad far away. Right now, virtually no one was using carriages anymore. Carriages were simply too slow for fleeing.

"That is..."

Linley instantly was able to recognize that golden-haired man in the center of the squad. It was the 'Golden Lion', Clayde. Clayde was currently issuing orders to his soldiers to kill the magical beasts besieging them. This squad's teamwork was really quite marvelous.

When a group of elite warriors of the seventh and eighth ranks worked together as one, they were actually more powerful than a group of the same size consisting only of warriors of the eighth rank that had no teamwork.

"Clayde." Linley's eyes lit up.

"Boss, let's make our move." Bebe was excited as well.

"Wait. We can't afford any mistakes this time. Wait for his squad to get closer to us, and then we will launch a sudden ambush." Linley remained on top of the roof, his cold eyes focused on that distant mounted squad.

....

"Don't waste any time. Quick." Clayde swung the giant warsword in his hands, chopping down a Dragonhawk from midair."

During this past half month, Clayde had managed to purge a small amount of Bloodrupture poison from his system, allowing him to recover 10% of his battle-qi. Although it was just 10%, he once more had the power of a warrior of the eighth rank.

But Clayde recognized that he would most likely need another half year to purge the remaining 90% of Bloodrupture poison from his body.

"Where the hell did all these magical beasts come from. Bastard." Clayde was growing more and more furious.

These magical beasts had destroyed his capital, and now they were threatening his life. How could he not be angry?

"Quick."

After killing all of the attacking magical beasts, Clayde immediately pressed his men to hurry on, and the troop of knights once more sped forward. As Clayde and his men travelled at high speeds through the pathways between the palace buildings, they didn't notice at all that someone was lying in wait on the roofs above.

Watching Clayde and his men draw nearer and nearer, Linley narrowed his eyes.

All the fur on Bebe's body was standing straight up.

"Now is the time!"

Linley's voice rang out in Bebe's head, and the two of them, man and magical beast, flew at high speeds towards Clayde. In that split second before launching, Linley's entire body was suddenly covered with a layer of black scales, and spikes sprouted from his forehead, his elbows, and his knees. From behind, that draconic tail sprouted out as well.

Dragonform!

That squad of knights lived up to their reputation of being elites. As soon as Linley and Bebe flew towards them, they immediately noticed and tried to react. But Linley and Bebe were simply too fast!

"Ah! It's you!" Immediately seeing that terrifying creature, Clayde knew without a doubt that Linley had come!

He didn't have time to wonder why Linley wasn't dead yet, because Linley's draconic tail had already arrived, viciously slapping at him from just two meters away. Behind him, Kaiser had already become caught up dealing with that black Shadowmouse and wasn't going to be able to save him.

"Whap!"

Linley's draconic tail slapped down mercilessly, and Clayde quickly dodged by tumbling to the ground. Linley's tail thus landed on the horse, and the animal was split into two halves by the sheer force of that vicious blow. The warhorse let out a pain-filled whinny before collapsing.

Fallen on the ground, Clayde pressed down on the ground with his fists and quickly retreated.

But now, Linley came chasing after him.

"Swish swish!" At the same time, eight spears gleaming with battle-qi were thrust at Linley.

"Haaargh!"

The Dragonblood battle-qi in Linley's body burst forth, and he used his right leg to viciously kick at the ground. He instantly reached an extremely high momentum as he shot forward like a boulder that had been catapulted forth in anger. Linley's body smashed fiercely against those eight spears.

The eight spears shuddered at almost the exact same time, and those eight streams of power essentially managed to cancel out with the power of Linley's charge.

"This will be troublesome." Linley frowned.

He didn't expect those eight knights would be able to block his attack so effortlessly.

But what Linley didn't know was that those eight knights were shocked and terrified as well. These eight knights were Clayde's personal bodyguards, the most elite of the elite Wildthunder Regiment. All of them were warriors of the eighth rank. Working together, the eight of them would even be able to hold off a warrior of the ninth rank.

However, not even a warrior of the ninth rank would dare to forcibly ram into their spears. But Linley had.

"What a freakishly strong defense." Hiding far away and protected by the remaining knights, Clayde's heart trembled.

"Shkreeeee!"

Bebe let out a piercing screech, then swept his fierce claws at Kaiser again and again, while sometimes using his fangs to bite at him as well. But Kaiser rather effortlessly managed to use his greatsword to block each of Bebe's attacks. Kaiser's sword techniques seemed very simple but were highly effective.

One step back, then a piercing stab with the sword that seemed incredibly hard to block.

"Clayde, who is going to rescue you today?" Linley looked at the mighty warriors in front of him and sneered. "Fine, you want to engage in group attacks?" As soon as Linley finished speaking, he immediately charged at one particular knight.

Linley didn't fear or pay attention to the attacks of the other knights, simply aiming himself at that one knight.

Now, their combined attacks were useless.

"Whoosh!" Linley was simply too fast. In the blink of an eye, he arrived by the side of that warrior of the eighth rank. Balling his fierce claws into a fist, he slammed it towards that warrior. The warrior leaned back to avoid it, but at this time, Linley's draconic tail suddenly swung forward and crushed the warrior's skull in.

"Thrall[Sa'er]!" Many of the knights howled in fury.

The Wildthunder Regiment had always trained together, and their affection for each other was no less than that of blood brothers. Many warriors furiously aimed their

attacks at Linley, and despite their anger, they were still able to coordinate their attacks very well, as greatswords and long spears attacked in perfect sequence.

“Pew!” The Bloodviolet Godsword suddenly appeared in Linley’s hands. Ignoring the attacks aimed at him, Linley flew to another knight while thrusting Bloodviolet directly towards his eyes. The sword went straight through his skull. The man died immediately.

“Die!” Instantly, another one of the knights pierced at Linley’s head with his own spear.

Linley flipped Bloodviolet around and struck a counterblow. Just as the knight was about to attempt to block it, Bloodviolet suddenly curved in midair and effortlessly cut the knight’s head off. Even without being activated by battle-qi, the Bloodviolet Godsword in Linley’s hands could easily kill a warrior of the seventh rank. And now, suffused by Linley’s Dragonblood battle-qi, the Bloodviolet Godsword was more than capable of killing a warrior of the eighth rank as well.

Bizarre attacks!

Three of the warriors of the eighth rank had died in the blink of an eye.

“I want to see how you’ll block me!” Linley once again charged towards Clayde, the devilish Bloodviolet Godsword flashing nonstop in the air. None of the knights dared to close with Linley, because that Godsword in Linley’s hands was simply too bizarre.

“Groooooowl!”

Suddenly, from far away, a roar could be heard.

“Rumble, rumble, rumble.” Ponderous, heavy footsteps shook the earth. The deep sounds and vibrations made it more than clear that this was an enormous magical beast headed their way, and it was drawing closer.

But Linley didn’t care about anything at this point.

“Block him, block him!” Clayde shouted loudly, while continuing to retreat.

Linley suddenly leapt into the air, launched himself off a wall, and flew towards Clayde at high speed. Seeing this though, Kaiser instantly kicked off and launched himself backwards as well, transforming into a blur and sweeping the greatsword in his hands directly towards Linley.

“Come.” Linley didn’t attempt to block the sword at all, aiming the Bloodviolet Godsword in his hands directly at Clayde.

“Last time, you had a Saint-level Fateguard to protect you and Heidens to save you. I want to see who will rescue you this time.” Linley’s dark gold eyes spat death at Clayde, and the Bloodviolet Godsword in his hands struck out towards Clayde’s throat like a vicious snake. Right now, Clayde had almost gone crazy as he began to wave the greatsword in his hands in an attempt to block.

“Haaah!” Very suddenly, Kaiser released his grip on his greatsword, letting it fly.

“Bam!” Linley didn’t manage to react in time, and his right arm was struck heavily by the greatsword. Right at that moment, the burning battle-qi contained within the greatsword burst forth. Linley felt his arm suddenly grow numb. Due to this smashing blow, the Bloodviolet Godsword in his hands was now more than a meter away from his target, Clayde.

“Hmph.”

The Bloodviolet Godsword suddenly curved in midair, wrapping itself around the greatsword in Clayde’s hands, then sliding down until it was wrapping around Clayde’s wrist, then chopped!

“Whap!”

Clayde’s right hand was cut off, and it fell to the ground with a thud. The fingers on the hand were still extended, and the sword fell to the ground as well. In addition, that severed hand had a ring on it. That ring was the most precious item of all to the royal clan of Fenlai – the interspatial ring.

“My hand! Get it back, get it back!” Clayde’s face had turned white from the pain, but he still shouted furiously.

This interspatial ring contained 22 magicrystal cards with a total value of 2.2 billion gold coins! In addition, it had several dozen precious treasures that the royal clan had accumulated over thousands of years. Clayde would rather die than allow this interspatial ring to be lost. This was the accumulated wealth of countless generations of his clan!

“Swish!”

A black blur suddenly flashed by and made off with the severed hand, then leapt onto Linley’s shoulders.

"Boss, the more Clayde wants something, the more we will prevent him from getting it." Standing on Linley's shoulders, Bebe mentally spoke to Linley. "But Boss, why would he want this severed hand so much? There's nothing special about this hand. Could it be that it is this ring that he wants?"

## Chapter 9

"Get it back, quick!" Clayde was so frantic that his face and neck were both beet red with rage. He roared, "The ring, get it back, get it back! A million gold coins to whoever gets it back!"

When the members of the Wildthunder Regiment heard the words 'a million gold coins', a hint of greed appeared in their eyes. All of the mighty knights began launching group attacks against Linley, and the leader of the Wildthunder Regiment, Kaiser, was the first to charge at him.

"Ring, eh? Looks like it really is valuable." Seeing how crazed Clayde had just become, Linley couldn't help but laugh coldly. With a powerful leap, he shot backwards at high speed, retreating. While retreating, Linley quickly pulled the ring off the severed hand, and then put it on his own finger.

"Linley, this is an interspatial ring!" Doehring Cowart said excitedly. Given his powerful soul, Doehring Cowart could instantly sense what was so special about this ring. An interspatial ring was a priceless treasure! Linley was shocked as well.

He had thought that this ring was something akin to an ancestral heirloom of the royal clan of Fenlai. He didn't expect it to be one of the fabled interspatial rings of legend. Interspatial rings were extremely rare. Even just two of the five Cardinals of the Radiant Church were in possession of interspatial rings.

No one was stupid enough to sell an interspatial ring.

And once these interspatial rings were imprinted and bound by the blood of its master, there was no way anyone else could use them. This was the best place to store treasures. Of course, there was one way to open an interspatial ring; kill the owner. Once the owner died, the interspatial ring would revert to being an unbound item. At that point, one could imprint and bind it to one's self and gain access to the treasures within.

"Whoosh."



Greatsword in hand, Kaiser stared fixedly at Linley as he suddenly pierced through the air. Carrying an explosive force that seemed capable of shattering mountains, the greatsword shattered the air and howled terrifyingly as it swung towards Linley. Linley could clearly, visibly see the red light flowing on the surface of the sword.

This power couldn't be blocked head on!

"Swish!" With another leap, Linley sent himself dodging in another direction again.

"Bam!" The wall Linley had been standing on was struck by the terrifying force of that sword, and an entire section of wall exploded outwards with the sword at the epicenter. The walls within a hundred meters of that blow all crumbled and collapsed.

"So powerful!" Linley was secretly amazed.

Far away, under the protection of his remaining guards, Clayde couldn't be bothered about the pain from his severed hand. He shouted loudly, "Quick, get the ring back for me, quick!" Clayde was about to go mad. Although he knew that Linley wouldn't be able to open the interspatial ring despite having it, if the ring remained in Linley's hands, then he, Clayde, wouldn't be able to access the items within it despite being its master.

2.2 billion gold coins! What an amazing, enormous sum of money that was.

Thousands of years of accumulated royal wealth. For these treasures and wealth to be taken away was more painful to him than being killed.

"Bam!"

A section of wall collapsed. An enormous magical beast was walking in the middle of the palace grounds, passing through walls as though it were walking on flat ground. One wall after another collapsed as though they were made from mud. This enormous magical beast had already noticed Clayde and Linley, and it roared in excitement. "Groooooooooow!"

"Violet Tattooed Bear!" Seeing that familiar figure, Linley wasn't too frightened. Perhaps it was because he could still remember the terrifying power of the Saint-level Violet Tattooed Bear in the Foggy Valley. In terms of size, this Violet Tattooed Bear was about the same size as the Saint-level Violet Tattooed Bear in the Foggy Valley, but Linley felt this bear's aura was not as formidable.

This Violet-Tattooed Bear was the one which had killed Duke Bonalt and his family. By now, he had begun to attack the palace.

Having seen Linley and Clayde's group, it was now gleefully charging through the palace towards them, roaring happily.

"Thud!" "Thud!" "Thud!" "Thud!"

The Violet-Tattooed Bear was a machine bred for war, with a body the size of a three-floor building and massive, sturdy bear paws. Even the sturdiest of walls would be shattered by a single blow of those paws. And right now, the bear's target was Linley and Clayde's group.

"Clayde, you want the ring? If you have the ability, come and get it." Linley shouted loudly while moving around at high speed.

"Bebe. You deal with those other warriors. This Kaiser, I'll handle." Linley said mentally.

"Fine. Boss, just watch me!" Bebe excitedly scurried towards that group of warriors.

Those combination attacks practiced by the warriors were all meant to be used against human-shaped opponents by attacking their vitals. They were of no use at all against a magical beast like Bebe which was physically small, extremely fast, and astonishingly durable.

Bebe stretched out his vicious claws and gave a nasty swipe. "Snick!" He slashed directly through half the neck of a warrior of the eighth rank, causing blood to spurt out wildly. That warrior's head directly swung down, only remaining connected to his body by a thin layer of skin.

"Hmph." Kaiser's eyes turned red, and with an angry shout, he chopped at Linley with his greatsword.

With a leap, Linley dodged, while at the same time his legs spun like a tornado. Carrying the power of a pair of sharp knives, Linley's legs chopped towards Kaiser's neck.

Kaiser leaned his head backwards while launching a counterattack, and Linley's kicks just barely brushed against Kaiser's face. Just a little closer, and he would've been able to kill Kaiser. While Kaiser was leaning his head back, he too launched a powerful kick at Linley, but Linley, who was in mid-air, didn't dodge at all.

"Swish!"

Linley's long, iron-whip-like tail suddenly pierced through the air, thrashing viciously towards Kaiser.

One attack after another!

If Kaiser was to continue his attack against Linley, then clearly this attack of Linley's would hit him as well. "Hrmph." Kaiser kicked the ground hard, sending himself flying backwards as he retreated at high speeds while at the same time, slamming the greatsword in his hands against Linley's tail. Kaiser's speed was so fast that he had retreated roughly a hundred meters in the blink of an eye.

"Whoosh!"

Kaiser once more charged forward at high speed. The greatsword in his hands was actually vibrating now, transforming into six illusionary swords, causing Linley not to know how to block.

"Ah!" Bebe killed another warrior, this one of the seventh rank, by crushing the warrior's skull with his fangs. This was Bebe's seventh kill.

These deaths only further enraged Kaiser, who had trained and taught these Wildthunder Regiment soldiers. But Linley was simply too hard to deal with. Not only could Linley attack with his hands and his feet, the attack power of his tail was also extremely terrifying. And Linley's durability was astonishingly high as well.

Fortunately...

In terms of both combat experience and tactical acumen, Linley couldn't compare to a true warrior of the ninth rank who had trained for over a hundred years.

"Quick, quick, get the ring back!" Clayde was at the verge of losing his sanity.

Right now, the situation was totally not in his favor. If this continued, they wouldn't have any chance of recovering the ring at all. Within that interspatial ring was thousands of years of accumulated wealth by the royal clan. Even if he died, he couldn't allow that ring to be lost.

"Roaaaaar!"

The Violet Tattooed Bear had finally arrived, and all the warriors nearby scattered in its wake. No one dared to fight with it head on. To engage in battle against a powerful magical beast of the ninth rank required one to be a warrior of the ninth rank at the very least. And given that magical beasts were naturally more powerful than humans, most likely even a warrior of the ninth rank would only be able to guarantee that he wouldn't die.

That Violet Tattooed Bear actually came to a halt and glanced at the group of people present. The intelligence of a high-rank magical beast wasn't inferior to that of humans at all, and a magical beast of the ninth rank might actually be even more intelligent than some humans. This Violet Tattooed Bear could easily tell that these people in front of him were divided into two groups. On one side, there was a man and a magical beast. The other were the knights who were led by the man with only one hand.

And that man with one hand seemed to be quite concerned about a ring.

The Violet Tattooed Bear could understand the human tongue. Although he couldn't speak in it, he could understand it. A hint of excitement appeared in the eyes of the Violet Tattooed Bear.

"Wooo, wooo!"

The Violet Tattooed Bear clapped its massive paws together excitedly, then charged directly towards Linley and Kaiser. Upon encountering any warriors in its path, it simply waved its massive paws, mercilessly batting them aside.

"Ah!" A warrior of the eighth rank tried frantically to dodge, while at the same time a jade-green light appeared from his body.

But although the Violet Tattooed Bear didn't move that quickly, its paws were able to attack at a terrifying speed. "WHAP!" The massive paw slammed against the warrior of the eighth rank. A sickening crunching sound could be heard as the man's head was instantly shattered. The warrior's battle-qi aura was shattered as well, and his body was reduced to nothing more than ground meat.

Even the ground beneath the man had a giant hole gouged into it, with deep cracks appearing in the area around the hole.

"Why is a magical beast of the ninth rank so much more powerful than humans of the same rank?" Seeing this from afar, Linley's heart couldn't help but feel surprise. Kaiser, still engaged in battle against Linley, grew frantic as well. He didn't have any confidence at all in his ability to deal with a Violet Tattooed Bear.

Violet Tattooed Bears possessed extremely thick, durable skin and tremendous power. Even giant dragons would probably be reduced to a pulp by its massive paws. Its only flaw was that in terms of movement speed, it was rather slow. Its attack speed, however, was still astonishingly high. The Violet Tattooed Bears could be considered one of the extremely powerful kinds of magical beasts of the ninth rank.

“Bam!” “Bam!” “Bam!”

Linley and Kaiser exchanged blows at high speed, and Linley’s arms, legs, and tail clashed nonstop with the greatsword. The speed of their blows was at an astonishingly high level. Linley, relying on his astonishing defense, dared to fight with seemingly suicidal attacks, but Kaiser’s techniques were effective, and he possessed both experience and powerful battle-qi.

The battle between them had no clear victor.

“Roaaaaar!” The Violet Tattooed Bear had reached Linley and Kaiser, and it swiped down with its massive paws towards the two men.

“Swish!” Linley and Kaiser both retreated backwards at high speed.

“Bam!” The sound of the bear’s paw slamming into the ground produced a deep vibration, causing the entire ground to shake, and the ground within ten meters of the blow became covered with cracks. Neither Linley nor Kaiser chose to attempt to forcibly block that blow!

A Violet Tattooed Bear’s paw was perhaps the most powerful, durable part of its body.

If they attempted to block it head on, the two of them would’ve both become nothing more than meat paste.

“Roaaaaar!” With a loud howl, the Violet Tattooed Bear actually turned and charged at Linley.

“Why the hell are you chasing ME?” Relying on his high speed, Linley began to flee. After having Dragonformed, Linley possessed the speed of a warrior of the ninth rank, and a very fast one at that. At the same time, the Violet Tattooed Bear’s weakness was its movement speed. It wasn’t too hard for Linley shake it off.

The Violet Tattooed Bear continued to charge forward, and anyone who got in its way was slapped to death.

It only pursued Linley!

Linley didn’t know that the Violet Tattooed Bear had taken a fancy to that ring. Given its intelligence, and its understanding of human languages, the Violet Tattooed Bear knew that the ring was something which both parties valued.

It was actually quite common for magical beasts of the ninth rank to understand the human tongues. They understood it, they just couldn't speak it, simply because their bodies weren't designed to speak it. But upon reaching the Saint-level, they could break free of this restriction and speak in human tongues.

"Ring, ring!" Clayde was about to cry.

"Your Majesty." Kaiser was standing guard in front of Clayde. "Your Majesty, it's best we leave now. If we don't leave, things will become extremely dangerous."

Of the 33 members of the Wildthunder Regiment, fourteen had just been killed by Bebe. The remaining members were beginning to panic as well. The magical beast in front of them was physically small, possessed astonishing durability, and terrifying attack power. It was highly suited for dealing with humans.

"Roaaaar!"

"Roaaaar!"

Suddenly, a mighty series of draconic roars could be heard from the skies, as hundreds of gigantic dragons with jade-green scales, blazing red scales, silvery scales, and even a very tyrannical-looking Black Dragon began to fly in this direction.

Dragons possessed a very high level of intelligence. They knew that the palace held many treasures, and dragons loved collecting treasures.

"Roaaaaaar!" The leader of this flight, the massive Black Dragon, focused on Clayde and Linley. With a mighty roar, it led the large pack of dragons to charge downwards towards the palace. Those Fire Dragons and Emerald Dragons were only dragons of the eighth rank, but Silver Dragons and Black Dragons were generally dragons of the ninth rank.

Seeing this, Clayde, Kaiser, and the others were all stunned.

A single magical beast of the ninth rank was already hard enough to deal with. And now a horde of beasts was coming?

"Boss, this isn't good. Let's run." Bebe's voice rang out in Linley's head as well, but right now, Linley was still being pursued by that Violet Tattooed Bear who had taken a fancy to that interspatial ring.

## Chapter 10

“Thud!” With each step of its massive feet on the ground, the Violet Tattooed Bear would make the earth shake. This Violet Tattooed Bear was fixated on Linley. No matter where Linley ran off to, the Violet Tattooed Bear followed, while its two massive bear paws continually tried to reach out at him.

“Groooooowl!”

Hearing those familiar dragon roars, Linley couldn’t help but look up at the skies. What he saw made his heart clench tightly.

The sky was covered with countless massive dragon bodies. In terms of numbers, there were definitely more here today than that time previously at the Foggy Valley. What’s more, within the host of dragons, there were even Silver Dragons and Black Dragons. Both of those were dragon-type beasts of the ninth rank!

“No!”

With a sudden leap, Linley avoided yet another attack from the Violet Tattooed Bear, then charged directly for Clayde. “No matter what, this time, I have to kill Clayde.”

“Get it, ring, get it back!” Clayde’s forehead was covered with sweat, but he didn’t dare charge forward himself.

“Roaaaar!”

“Roaaaar!”

Several dozen dragons swooped down from the skies, blasting forth dragonfire from their mouths. The flames belched forth by the Black Dragons were black in color as well, while the Silver Dragons exhaled plumes of silvery-white flames. Clearly, in terms of temperature, the black flames and silver flames were far hotter than the dragonfire of the Fire Dragons.

“Sizzle sizzle.”

The temperature of the surrounding area immediately began to rise at a terrifying speed as several dozens streams of dragonfire blasted down.

“Your Majesty, if we don’t leave, we’ll die for sure! If we’re dead, treasures will be useless to us!” Kaiser’s entire body was suffused with red battle-qi. He roared frantically at Clayde, who started.

“CLAYDE!!!”

A furious roar from the fully Dragonformed Linley, who was shooting towards him like an arrow.

“Go. Go, let’s go!” Clayde immediately howled out the order angrily. This decision of Clayde was an extremely painful one for him, but he too understood that if he died here, everything would be lost. In addition, his eldest prince and his second prince both had magicrystal cards on them, with a combined value of a billion gold coins.

A billion gold coins was definitely enough to allow a royal clan to rebuild and flourish again.

“Bam!” Kaiser’s giant sword once again blocked Linley’s attack.

“Kaiser, let me kill Clayde. No matter how much gold you desire, I’ll give it to you.” Linley was half-mad with anxiousness as well.

Kaiser just shook his head.

“Roaaaar!”

Right at this moment, a Black Dragon suddenly swooped down and tried to snatch Linley with its claws. Black Dragons were highly intelligent. Seeing how the Violet Tattooed Bear continuously pursued and tried to kill Linley, it was sure that there had to be a reason for the bear’s fixation. Thus, its first target was Linley.

“Me again?” Linley frantically dodged to the side.

Just now, when he had been fighting with Kaiser, that Violet Tattooed Bear had decided to chase after him instead of Kaiser. And now, the same thing was happening again. The Black Dragon of the ninth rank chased after the fleeing Linley.

“Whew.” Kaiser paid no more attention to Linley as he hurriedly upped his speed to the maximum and fled away. Immediately, several of the giant dragons began a pursuit of Clayde and Kaiser, but the large majority of them continued to encircle and attack Linley.

The Violet Tattooed Bear began to roar in anger as it rose to its hind feet.

Clearly, it was enraged at the dragons for stealing its prey, but the Violet Tattooed Bear didn’t dare to openly fight against the dragons either. The Violet Tattooed Bear wasn’t confident of beating even that extremely large Black Dragon leader of this host of dragons, to say nothing of the rest of the dragons.



“Thud!” “Thud!” “Thud!”

The Violet Tattooed Bear began to walk away in a different direction, moving a long distance with each stride. Every building in its way was crushed and demolished.

“Clayde!” Seeing Clayde and his men grow farther and farther away, Linley wanted to immediately chase after them.

But yet another massive dragon descended from the skies. This was a massive Black Dragon, over a hundred meters long, and it blocked the road in front of Linley while constantly reaching for Linley with its claws. From its mouth, it repeatedly blasted hot flames at Linley.

Both the earth and the skies were covered in dragons, and all of them were launching attacks at Linley. Surrounded and attacked by so many dragons, Linley felt miserable as well.

“Bastards!”

Encircled and besieged by a large number of dragons, Linley could only watch as Clayde disappeared from his field of vision.

“Boss, we need to flee!” Bebe was frantic now.

Bebe was extremely agile, and also very small. It would be very difficult for those dragons to attack him. What’s more, Bebe’s fierce claws and sharp fangs were very powerful as well. His attack power was now enough to cause some harm to the dragons, causing all of them to be quite nervous with respect to that little tiny thing.

“Go. Go where?”

No matter in which direction Linley tried to flee, a host of dragons would block and attack. He wasn’t afraid of dragons of the eighth rank, but there were more than ten dragons of the ninth rank as well.

“Whap!”

Linley was attacked viciously by a Silver Dragon’s tail, but Linley only flipped around in the air before trying to flee again. But it was useless. In midair, several dragons encircled and attacked again. Linley was in such a bad situation that he wanted to cry.

“Swish!” Linley very agilely avoided an attack by a fierce claw, continuing to dodge about at high speed.

“Boss, I’ll help you!” Seeing the danger Linley was in, Bebe immediately flew over as well and began chomping down viciously at the leg of that dragon. CRUNCH! CRUNCH! CRUNCH!

“Roaaaaar!” That giant dragon let out a roar of pain.

Relying on his astonishing speed, Linley managed to resolve one draconic attack after another. Whenever he met with real danger, Bebe would help out. The dragons weren’t able to do anything to Linley for now either.

In their eyes, this human-shaped aberration was too hard to deal with, and that even smaller-sized rat-type magical beast kept on nibbling at them and causing them pain.

“Roaaaaar!” The leading Black Dragon let out another roar.

Instantly, all of the dragons flew into the air. They had already made the decision to give up this battle against this difficult-to-deal-with human-shaped aberration. It was totally not worth it for an entire host of dragons to waste so much time on a single human-shaped aberration.

The host of dragons flew away, just like that.

“They left?” Linley was startled.

Just moments ago, he had been frantically dealing with the attacks of many dragons, and he had been dodging for his life. That was a very miserable experience. He didn’t expect the dragons to give up just like that.

“Boss, let’s go now!” Bebe urged.

“Right. Clayde.”

Recalling Clayde, Linley maintained his Dragonform and led Bebe at a high speed charge through the city.

By now, the vicious battles between man and magical beast within Fenlai City had all but come to an end. There were very few living people within Fenlai City now, and virtually the only creatures alive on the streets were magical beasts that were hunting for living humans. The Dragonformed Linley moved too fast, and what’s more, the fact that his body was covered in scales deceived many magical beasts into thinking that Linley was a magical beast as well.

“Not here.”

Linley had led a chase in the direction where he thought Clayde would've fled to, but even after escaping Fenlai City, he still didn't find any traces of Clayde's party.

Outside Fenlai City. A desolate scene.

Even many of the great trees that had lined the road to and from Fenlai City had been shattered. Countless human corpses lay on the road as well. Clearly, these people had managed to flee Fenlai City, but had been killed outside the city by magical beasts nonetheless.

In the desolate countryside outside Fenlai City, small groups of one or two magical beasts could be seen everywhere.

"I wonder what direction that Clayde ran off in." Linley stared at the three branching forks ahead of him. He felt very helpless. It was possible that Clayde might've even left through the East Gate of Fenlai City, but as Linley saw it, that was unlikely, because the further east they went, the closer they would have become to the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts.

Thus, Linley had chosen to exit via the West Gate.

But despite having left by the West Gate, Linley still didn't know in what direction he should now head. After all, there were hoof prints pointing every which way.

"Perhaps that Clayde didn't choose any of the roads, and went cross-country into the wilderness." Linley said to himself. The weakest person in Clayde's party was of the seventh rank, and so going cross-country wouldn't be difficult at all.

Linley understood that the chance of finding Clayde in the wilderness was very, very low!

"North. I heard that 'King' of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts say that the people of the Holy Union could only flee to the north! I'll head north as well. Given Clayde's fame, there's no way that his passing will attract no attention. When I reach the north, I'll search for him again." Linley made up his mind.

Seeing the corpses littering the area around him, Linley couldn't help but sigh.

"Ah! Wushan township!"

Linley suddenly thought of his own hometown. Wushan township was less than a hundred kilometers away from Fenlai City. What sort of shape was Wushan township currently in? Linley couldn't be bothered to cancel his Dragonform

transformation, as he began to run at high speed available to him towards Wushan township.

Although Linley wasn't moving at maximum speed, after having assumed the Dragonform, he was able to easily travel two or three hundred kilometers each hour as a warrior of the ninth rank.

The trees on each side of the road quickly disappeared into the distance, and dust flew about everywhere.

"Is that...?" A fleeing mounted knight suddenly saw a human-shaped aberration suddenly charge in his direction from behind. He couldn't help but be frightened, but Linley only passed him by, moving like the wind towards Wushan township. This was the speed of a warrior of the ninth rank! Within twenty minutes, Linley had drawn close enough that he could see his hometown.

Wushan township.

This was a very quiet little township. In the past, the lives of the commoners here had been very peaceful.

But now...

Corpses. Mutilated corpses everywhere. Those corpses clearly bore the signs of having been ravaged by magical beasts.

"This...this..." Linley walked onto the main road of Wushan township. He stared at the corpses littering the main road or the side alleys. There were old people, young people, women, children...seeing all this, Linley couldn't help but feel grief in his heart.

Linley recognized the majority of these dead people.

Linley suddenly saw a young man not far away, clutching a baby in his arms. That young man's body was covered with blood, and that baby had been bitten to death as well.

"Or...Orson [Ao'sen]." Linley wanted to cry, but the tears wouldn't come out.

Orson was only one year older than him. When Linley had first started his physical training at the empty training grounds outside Wushan township, both of them had been placed within the six-to-eight year old group. Orson was the little boy who had stood right next to Linley when they had lined up. The two of them were on fairly

good terms. Linley knew that two years ago, Orson had gotten married after reaching the age of maturity. That dead infant was most likely Orson's child.

"Rip. Rip." Not too far away, several Windwolves were chewing on the corpses of the dead.

"Ah!" Linley cast a furious glare at them, then flew towards them like a bolt of lightning. He didn't use his Bloodviolet Godsword. Using his two hands, he either smashed their heads in or ripped them into several pieces barehanded.

In the blink of an eye, the few dozen magical beasts which had remained in Wushan township were all killed.

Seeing the magical beast corpses around him, as well as the human corpses, Linley cancelled his Dragonform transformation, a pained laugh escaping him. And then, he felt to his knees, powerless.

Everyone was dead.

"Haha..." Linley began to laugh in a low voice, but his eyes had begun to fill with tears.

"When the magical beasts ambushed the city and I escaped from the Radiant Temple, I was so immeasurably smug and self-satisfied with myself. But..." Linley's tears began to flow. Only now did Linley truly understand the meaning behind the words that 'King' of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts had spoken.

"How could I be a pathetic human? Humans are nothing more than food to us magical beasts!"

"Food. Food."

Linley's heart was filled with grief.

Wushan township. His hometown. These familiar fellow villagers!

All dead.

When he had left his hometown, Linley had felt fairly calm, because he had always known that his hometown would still be there. But now...his hometown was gone. Everyone was dead.

"What a calamity." Doehring Cowart's ancient voice rang out. "Not just for your hometown. Most likely nearly half of the entire Holy Union has now become the domain of magical beasts. Those people...will become nothing more than food."

Linley quietly stared at his surroundings. He could totally envision how the countless people within the domain of the Holy Union had now been trapped within a catastrophic nightmare. This so-called day of joy, the 10000th anniversary of the Yulan Festival, to the people of the Holy Union and the Dark Alliance, had become a day of catastrophe.

## Chapter 11

When a catastrophe occurred, the only thing a person could do was accept it.

After leaving Wushan township, Linley and Bebe headed north. Everything Linley saw only made him all the more taciturn. The entire Kingdom of Fenlai had turned into a playground for magical beasts, and human corpses were nothing more than food for them.

On the long road north, magical beasts occasionally dotted the landscape. Not a single living human being could be seen.

But suddenly, a human form appeared at the end of the road. The human form was moving forward quickly, and was being pursued by several howling magical beasts. But with a few flashes of violet light, those magical beasts were diced apart, and the human form continued northwards. On this person's shoulders, there was an adorable little black Shadowmouse.

"Boss, shouldn't we find a place to rest? I'm getting a bit hungry." Standing on Linley's shoulders, Bebe mentally spoke to Linley.

Linley cast a helpless look at Bebe.

This entire trip, he was the one who had been actively moving, while Bebe was either just standing on his shoulders, enjoying the wind, or sleeping inside Linley's clothes. How exactly was he tired?

"Fine. There's a mountain up ahead. We can kill a few magical beasts and cook them for food." Linley still pampered and spoiled Bebe as always. To Linley, aside from his three bros and his younger brother Wharton, who was in the O'Brien Empire along with Uncle Hillman and Housekeeper Hiri, he had no close kin. But meeting with Wharton or his three bros was and would be an extremely rare thing.

Only Bebe would always be by his side.

In Linley's heart, he viewed Bebe as a younger brother to be pampered and spoiled.

“This Bloodviolet Godsword is still quite handy when dealing with magical beasts of the seventh or eighth ranks. But it is quite hard for it to penetrate the defense of a magical beast of the ninth rank and deliver a sufficiently deadly wound.” Linley glanced at the sword at his waist and sighed.

The Bloodviolet Godsword was very sharp and very fast, and could bend in any which way he desired it to, and was thus extremely useful when dealing against large numbers of weaker enemies. But when used to deal with a single powerful magical beast, this Bloodviolet Godsword of Linley’s was actually not even as good as Linley’s own claws and draconic tail.

At the base of the stubby mountain, Linley and Bebe were roasting a pair of wolf legs. Bebe and Linley had not yet left the boundaries of the Kingdom of Fenlai, and so the area was swarming with magical beasts. But given Linley and Bebe’s current power, as long as they didn’t encounter any Saint-level magical beasts, they would be safe.

“It’s cooked.” Bebe immediately grabbed a haunch of wolf leg and began to chomp through it.

With a wave of his hand, Linley extinguished the fire, then grabbed a roasted wolf leg and began eating as well. This roasted wolf leg, when cooked alongside some wild herbs and grasses, was actually quite tasty. In the mountain wilderness areas, one could often find some ingredients which could be used for cooking. This was a survival skill one learned in the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts, and Linley naturally knew it.

That wolf leg was much larger than Bebe, but Bebe finished eating it before Linley had. By the time Linley was halfway through, Bebe had finished his portion.

“Slither slither.”

Suddenly, a very minute sound could be heard from far away. Linley froze in mid-bite, while Bebe’s little ears perked up as well. In unison, the man and the magical beast turned to stare behind them.

It was a python.

An enormous python, easily the size of a house. Those two bizarre, reptilian eyes looked like giant red lanterns. Only ten or so meters of its enormous body could be seen outside of a grove, but just judging from the fact that its body was three meters thick, Linley could easily imagine how terrifyingly large this creature really was.

The visible ten or so meters was just a small part of it.

Seeing the dense black skin, tattooed with yellow lines, the expression on Linley's face changed.

"It's a Titanic Black Python." Linley was instantly sure of this magical beast's breed.

Titanic Black Pythons were considered one of the more powerful types of pythons. Generally speaking, adult Titanic Black Pythons were magical beasts of the ninth rank, roughly on par with the Nine Headed Serpents. Amongst python-type beasts, the Titanic Black Python was famed as a war machine.

If you were to place a Titanic Black Python in the middle of an army, it could definitely kill a hundred thousand soldiers.

It was a darkness-style magical beast with incredible defensive powers. Its fangs were poisonous. These were the special traits of the Titanic Black Python.

"Hisssss. Hisssss." The forked tongue of the Titanic Black Python flicked in and out, and its cold eyes stared at Linley and Bebe. Clearly, this Titanic Black Python had already decided that Linley and Bebe were to be its next meals.

"Bebe. Be careful."

Linley's gaze was locked on the Titanic Black Python, not daring to relax in the slightest. At the same time, dense black scales began to erupt from Linley's skin, and a row of spikes rose up out of his back. His forehead, elbows, and knees all sprouted fierce, sharp spikes as well.

"Whap. Whap." Linley's draconic tail slapped the ground a few times. By Linley's side, all of the hair on Bebe's body was standing up straight.

Seeing this, the Titanic Black Python suddenly rose up high in the air. Clearly, it was now on guard and vigilant.

"Whoosh!"

Like a gust of wind, the entire body of the Titanic Black Python shot forward. In less than a second, its enormous, hundred-meter long body was striking against Linley and Bebe, who both also almost simultaneously launched attacks against the Titanic Black Python.

"Swish!" Bloodviolet flashed.



“Clang!” Linley heard a sound similar to a hammer striking against an anvil. His Bloodviolet Godsword had only been able to leave behind a white mark on the Titanic Black Python’s skin, and hadn’t managed to wound it at all.

“It really is very durable.”

The enormous body of the Titanic Black Python began to wrap around Linley. Linley knew that if he allowed it to constrict him, not only would he be unable to breathe, the terrifyingly powerful constrictive force would probably be able to crush him to death.

“Haaaa!”

Linley’s sharp claws suddenly pierced towards the Titanic Black Python’s body. With a ‘rip’ sound, his claws penetrated the Titanic Black Python’s outer layer of scales. However, Linley could feel that his claws could go no further. Beneath the scales, Linley could sense an astonishingly durable force.

“Whoosh!” The Python was about to constrict Linley!

Linley only laughed coldly. He suddenly ripped his claws free and leaped outside of the Titanic Black Python’s coils, while at the same time smashing his elbows down at the Titanic Black Python. Linley’s elbows had those sharp spikes on them, which were the unique traits of Armored Razorback Wyrms and possessed astonishing power.

“Riiip!” The spike pierced through the black scales and slowly penetrated downwards.

“What exactly is underneath the scales of this Titanic Black Python? Its defense is so formidable.” Linley’s sharp spike was only able to penetrate halfway through before being stopped.

“Aaaargh!”

The Titanic Black Python let out an angry, pain-filled roar, and in a flash, its massive head struck towards Linley, its bloody maw opened wide. Suddenly, a black liquid shot out from its mouth and was spat towards Linley.

“Venom.” Linley immediately leapt off against the body of the Titanic Black Python, hurriedly dodging backwards.

But the amount of black venom was too great, and the area it covered too large. Some of it still managed to land on Linley’s legs.

"Sizzle, sizzle." A strange sound could be heard coming from Linley's legs.

Linley could feel that the black venom which landed on his legs had been totally blocked by that layer of defensive scales. The defensive powers of an Armored Razorback Wurm were quite formidable, and the venom didn't pose much of a danger to the scales.

"Boss, let's run. That Titanic Black Python is freakishly tough. Its scales and flesh are too thick." Bebe urged.

"Run."

Without hesitating in the slightest, Linley and Bebe went running northwards. Slithering forward rapidly, the Titanic Black Python gave chase for a while, but in the end, Linley and Bebe managed to leave it in the dust.

After escaping the Titanic Black Python's pursuit, Linley and Bebe finally left the boundaries of the former Kingdom of Fenlai. However, despite having left its boundaries, they still saw the same desolate sights. It seemed as though the 'King' of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts had told the truth.

They intended to take over half of the territory which had belonged to the Holy Union.

"Swish!"

Bloodviolet flashed, easily cutting a Dragonhawk in two.

"Bebe, tell me, why is it so hard for us to deal with magical beasts of the ninth rank?" By now, Linley had already encountered several magical beasts of the ninth rank, such as the Black Dragon and Violet Tattooed Bear in Fenlai City. When faced with these creatures, Linley was forced to dodge. There was no way for him to take them head on.

Even when dealing with the fairly slow Violet Tattooed Bear and Titanic Black Python, Linley wasn't able to truly harm them.

Bebe was speechless as well.

Bebe and Linley both had the same problem. Bebe's problem was that he was physically small, and probably wouldn't even be able to chew past the opponent's thick skin with his teeth. How would he harm the enemy?

"Linley." Doehring Cowart's voice rang out.

Linley suddenly came to his senses.

Right. Why not ask Grandpa Doehring? Grandpa Doehring had vast experience, and certainly should've seen many Saint-level combatants. He must have some sort of understanding in this regard.

"Linley, are you frustrated by the question of dealing with magical beasts of the ninth rank?" Doehring Cowart laughed.

Linley nodded. "Yes, Grandpa Doehring. Do you know what I should do?"

Doehring Cowart continued, "Linley, actually, your Bloodviolet Godsword is quite powerful. But the problem is, pre-Dragonform, you are only a warrior of the seventh rank. Post-Dragonform, you are still only an early-stage ninth rank warrior. As an early-stage ninth rank warrior, you think you can kill a magical beast of the ninth rank?"

Linley was startled.

Right. The problem was that he wasn't strong enough.

"When you enter the eighth rank, you will be a peak-stage warrior of the ninth rank in Dragonform. By then, you will be able to harm magical beasts of the ninth rank using your claws or using Bloodviolet." Doehring Cowart chuckled. "However, it's still possible for you at your current level of power to deal with magical beasts of the ninth rank as well."

"How?" Linley exulted. Grandpa Doehring really did know a way!

Doehring Cowart said, "Linley, did you notice that both Kaiser and Clayde used greatswords?"

Linley thought back to his battles. Right, Kaiser and Clayde did indeed both use greatswords.

"Do you know why they use greatswords?" Doehring Cowart asked.

Linley was beginning to grow curious. Right. As warriors of the ninth rank, Clayde and Kaiser naturally knew that using lighter weapons would be faster. Why did they choose to use greatswords instead? Linley couldn't help but to think back to those battles he had with Kaiser.

“Linley, when I was young, I remember that whenever my father was cutting down trees, he would always use heavy axes, rather than small hatchets. Why is that?” Doehring Cowart guided patiently.

Linley started to have an inkling of understanding.

“Light weapons are sharp. When dealing with large groups of enemies, they are very effective. But when fighting in solo combat against a powerful foe, they are inferior to heavy weapons. Through usage of a heavy weapon, a person can utilize more of his power and increase the force of his blows. And...to a warrior of the ninth rank, even a weapon weighing a few hundred pounds won’t slow him down too much.”

Linley was now beginning to truly comprehend.

Only through using heavy weapons could one truly unleash all of the power they were capable of.

For example, would a strongman deliver more powerful blows using a massive mace, or a light sword? A Dragonblood Warrior was capable of lifting boulders weighing tens of thousands of pounds. Their potential strength was extremely astonishing.

“No wonder why when I faced the Titanic Black Python, I felt as though using the Bloodviolet Godsword wasn’t as effective as using my own fists and claws.” Linley said. “Perhaps I too should find a heavy weapon to use.”

While chatting, Linley continued to make his way northwards into the desolate wilderness.

“Boss, there’s a squad of knights up ahead.” Bebe suddenly said to him mentally.

Linley looked carefully. Indeed, up ahead, there was a squad of knights taking a break up ahead. Linley had already encountered quite a few such squads. Generally speaking, squads capable of surviving in these magical beast infested lands were composed of elite soldiers belonging to major clans.

“No need to pay them any mind.” Linley ignored these people, continuing forward.

But when he drew near, Linley suddenly noticed a familiar face.

“Shaq? Second Prince Shaq?” Linley was startled.

As the Prime Court Magus for the Kingdom of Fenlai, Linley knew both Crown Prince Carre and Second Prince Shaq.

## Chapter 12

Travelling on this desolate road, Shaq, the Second Prince of Fenlai, was bitterly cursing at these magical beasts. Off in the distance, Linley quietly removed the interspatial ring from his fingers and placed it within one of his pockets.

“The royal clan of Fenlai divided into several squads when they left. No doubt, they had made prior arrangements for where they would meet up.”

Linley was worrying about where he would find Clayde, but now that heaven had delivered Shaq and his squad to him, how could Linley not be overjoyed? In addition, Linley could guess...that when he had tried to assassinate Clayde, then been captured by the Radiant Church, the Radiant Church had originally still planned to make use of him and thus had most likely had ordered Clayde to keep silent.

“Perhaps this Shaq doesn’t yet know that the ‘demon’ who tried to kill his father was me.”

As he was thinking these thoughts, Linley began to walk in Shaq’s direction.

Linley had another thought as well. “If Shaq knows that I tried to kill his father, then none of them will be spared!” Shaq’s men were powerful in comparison to most magical beasts, but compared to these two freaks Linley and Bebe, they weren’t much at all.

“Second Prince! Your Highness!”

Linley called out in a loud, friendly voice.

Shaq, who had been eating roasted meat while cursing, started upon hearing Linley’s shout. He swiveled his head over to look at Linley. As he did so, Linley and Bebe both watched him carefully, paying attention to his every facial expression and to his gaze.

“If anything seems off at all, first we capture, then we kill!” Linley carefully watched Shaq’s eyes and face.

Upon seeing Linley, Shaq excitedly jumped to his feet. He charged over, his burly body two meters tall, and immediately pulled Linley into a massive hug. In an overjoyed voice, he said, “Lord Linley, you actually made it out safely! This is wonderful, wonderful!”

"I am very happy to be able to see you here as well, Second Prince!" Linley didn't detect any falseness in Shaq's eyes or expressions. He nodded to himself.

Linley's guess was spot on. Clayde had been instructed by the Radiant Church to remain silent, and that he could not, no matter what, reveal that the 'demon' who had attempted to assassinate him was Linley. No matter how daring Clayde was, he wouldn't dare disobey the direct orders of the Radiant Church.

"Lord Linley, have you eaten yet? Come, come eat with us." Shaq warmly said.

Right now, Shaq had no idea that he was walking on a fine line between life and death. If just now, there had been anything wrong with his facial expressions, he would've died.

"Lord Linley, please don't blame my royal father for not rescuing you. Those hordes of monsters came too quickly. My royal father had no choice. He didn't even bring most of his royal consorts, only just the most important ones." Shaq explained on behalf of his father.

"I can understand." Linley nodded while walking towards their camp.

All of those elite knights reminded Linley of the Wildthunder Regiment knights he had fought back when he attacked Clayde at the royal palace. The knights in front of him had a very similar aura and bearing to those knights back then. Aside from those thirty or so knights, there was a slightly older lady, and a little girl who was only five or six years old.

"My respects to you, Royal Consort. My respects to you, Princess."

Linley immediately bowed towards those two women.

The very beautiful, refined-looking consort was over forty years old, but she looked as though she was barely thirty. She was an alluring, attractive woman. The consort immediately laughed. "Linley, when his Majesty left, he was in a terrible rush. He didn't bring a single magus with him. And, he felt confident that the Radiant Church would rescue you, thus..."

Both Shaq and the consort immediately made explanations for Clayde.

Both Shaq and the consort felt that it was very important to have good relations with Linley. They didn't know the real relationship between Linley and Clayde.

"I understand." But in his heart, Linley was laughing coldly. Earlier, when he was battling with Clayde's men in the palace, Linley had already noticed that the guards

consisted solely of knights, and that no magi were present. Similarly, there were no magi present here in Shaq's squad either.

Clearly, when fleeing, Clayde hadn't had time to look after his magi at all.

Although magi were very useful when it came to doing battle, this time they were engaging in flight, not in battle with magical beasts. Bringing a magus along would actually slow things down. How could a magus travel as quickly as a powerful warrior? Some of the more powerful warriors could run like the wind even if they had no horse. But magi?

.....

On this desolate road, Shaq and his squad continued to hurry forward nonstop. Some of the formerly prosperous villages on the way had already been reduced to ash, and rotting corpses were strewn everywhere. In this wasteland, magical beasts could often be seen roaming about singly or in pairs.

Those lucky humans who had manage to escape the first massacre would eventually all be chased down and eaten by these roaming magical beasts.

"Our Kingdom of Fenlai is finished."

Shaq, riding side by side with Linley on their horses, said with a sigh as he looked off into the distance. Occasionally, a magical beast would launch attacks against them, but the Wildthunder knights would easily dispose of them. Shaq and Linley's conversations weren't disrupted at all.

"Most likely nine out of ten citizens of the Kingdom of Fenlai are dead now." Linley's face was full of sorrow and despair as well.

Shaq nodded slightly.

In his heart, Shaq was also in mourning. The destruction of the Kingdom of Fenlai meant that his clan was no longer a royal clan. When there was no kingdom, how could there be a royal clan?

"Fortunately..." Shaq's thoughts turned to the five magicrystal cards in his bag. With these five magicrystal cards, even though the royal clan of Fenlai no longer had a kingdom, it wouldn't be too hard for them to become a powerful clan again, thanks to their thousands of years of accumulated wealth. Linley suddenly said, "Second Prince, where will we be meeting with his Majesty?"

The purpose of Linley travelling with Shaq was to learn of Clayde's whereabouts.

Shaq said with resignation, "Lord Linley, my royal father and I originally didn't expect the scope of this disaster to be so wide. Thus, the two meeting points we had originally designated were within the Kingdom of Fenlai's borders and are now useless. Right now, the only thing I can do is follow our original plan and keep heading north. When we reach one of the cities that was designated by me and my royal father, we will stop, if the city is safe."

Linley instantly understood.

Clayde and Shaq had designated more than one city as possible rendezvous points. They most likely designated a string of cities heading north of the city of Fenlai. Whichever city was safe would be the city they would stop at.

"Which cities did you and his Majesty designate as meeting points?" Linley asked with a laugh.

Shaq wasn't suspicious at all. He immediately said, "There were quite a few cities. Some were within the Kingdom of Fenlai, while others were in the kingdoms and dukedoms to the north. We even designated a city within the O'Brien Empire."

"The O'Brien Empire?" Linley began to laugh.

Shaq said, somewhat embarrassed, "My royal father was worried that these magical beasts might take over the territory of the entire Holy Union. If that was the case, we would be forced to flee to the O'Brien Empire. The O'Brien Empire is the empire with the strongest military force in the Yulan continent, and definitely would be able to stop those magical beasts."

Linley knew much more than Shaq did.

The O'Brien Empire didn't just possess a powerful military. It also had War God O'Brien.

As long as the War God was present, even that 'King' of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts would have to seriously consider whether or not attacking the O'Brien Empire was a good idea.

"No need to over-think it. We'll just continue to make our way forward. When we reach a safe spot, we'll find the nearest city that my father and I designated, then we'll rest. Lord Linley, let's speed up. Giddy up, giddy up!" As he spoke, Shaq sped up as well. Their hoof steps speeding up, the squad of knights quickly made their way through the wilderness.



Travelling with Shaq and his squad, Linley no longer had to personally act when they were attacked by magical beasts. Those Wildthunder troops disposed of all the attackers.

Three days later.

“Two kingdoms and three duchies have collapsed.”

Shaq and Linley had passed the Kingdom of Fenlai, the Kingdom of Hanmu, as well as two duchies. They had just entered the Dukedom of Ligaode, but here, too, no humans could be seen.

Such a huge swath of territory had fallen. This really was an astonishing event.

After all, the Holy Union only had six kingdoms and fifteen duchies to begin with.

“Growl.”

“Growl.”

A series of growls from magical beasts could be heard from far away, mixed with the shouts of men. Hearing those mixed sounds, Linley and Shaq immediately knew what was going on.

“There’s a battle between humans and magical beasts going on up ahead.” Shaq frowned. Rubbing his chin, he said, “Everyone, be careful. Let’s go around them.”

“Yes.” The members of the Wildthunder squad said respectfully.

Leading his men, Shaq carefully circled around the area in front. But when they got close to the combat area, Shaq suddenly stared at the battlefield. “Prince Louis [Luo’yi]?”

Linley also turned to pay attention to that battlefield. Another elite squad of knights was there, but unfortunately, this squad had terrible luck. They had run into a pack of Fire Lions.

Fire Lions were fire-element magical beasts of the seventh rank. They could easily blast fireballs from their mouths, and their bodies were wreathed in flame.

Although they were ‘only’ magical beasts of the seventh rank, magical beasts naturally were more powerful than most humans of the same rank. Even a warrior of the eighth rank would usually have to expend some effort to kill a fire-element magical beast of the seventh rank. But clearly, within that elite squad of knights,

there were very few warriors of the eighth rank. The majority were of the seventh rank.

Over half of this squad of knights had died as a result of this battle against nearly twenty Fire Lions. Only a third of the Fire Lions had perished.

But although half of the knights had perished, none of the warriors of the eighth rank had. Thus, in reality, the squad of knights had only lost a third of its total combat potential.

“Stop.” Shaq ordered.

The group of knights were startled, but they all nodded. The power of the Wildthunder squad, when added to Prince Louis’ forces, should be enough to kill those Fire Lions without too much trouble. But what surprised them was that Shaq didn’t permit them to do battle right away.

Another half of Prince Louis’ men had died or been injured, including two warriors of the eighth rank. Half of the Fire Lions had died as well. Only now did Shaq give the order.

“Let’s go. Rescue Prince Louis.” Shaq suddenly ordered his men.

“Yes!”

Instantly, the Wildthunder squad began to charge. With the added strength of these thirty-plus warriors, ten of them of the eighth rank, five of the Fire Lions were instantly killed. The rest, seeing the writing on the wall, quickly turned tail and fled.

“Prince Shaq, thank you, thank you!”

Prince Louis was an extremely handsome young man, but right now, he looked to be in a very sorry state. Upon seeing Shaq, Louis was so grateful that he ran over to hug him.

“Prince Louis, alas, I saw your squad of knights attacked from quite far away, but due to self-preservation considerations, I hesitated for a while. Only after I saw it was you did I order my men to come attack. I hope you won’t blame me.” Shaq said very ‘honestly’. He regretfully added, “If I had come a bit earlier, you would’ve lost fewer men.”

Earlier, Shaq and his knights had waited far away for quite a while. How could experts like Louis and his men not be aware?

In his heart, Louis had borne a grudge towards Shaq, but now, hearing him say this, Louis somewhat believed him.

It made sense.

After such a disaster had occurred, who would go rescue someone who had no relation to one's self?

"Prince Shaq, no need to say such things. I am already extremely grateful. If it weren't for you, most likely only two or three of us would be remaining. Hey, no need. We can take care of our own people's corpses." Seeing one of Shaq's men actually go and remove the bags from the corpses of their own volition, Louis shouted out at them.

As soon as the Fire Lions had fled, those few lucky survivors of Prince Louis' force immediately went to remove the bags from the corpses of the deceased, then put them on.

This naturally raised Shaq's suspicions.

Why bring the bags of the deceased? Thus, he ordered that man to go remove some of the bags. Indeed, it had agitated Prince Louis. "Alright, here you go." Shaq's knight immediately handed the bag over. When Louis' knight received the bag, he glared angrily at Shaq's knight.

Seeing this, Shaq only laughed coldly in his heart.

This was too easy to guess.

Very few royal clans were in possession of an interspatial ring. The royal clan of Fenlai had only managed to acquire one through great luck. Now that disaster had struck, naturally these royal clans would want to take the treasures in their treasuries with them. Without interspatial rings, the only option was to carry them in bags. For Prince Louis to be so agitated about these bags most likely meant that he was having his subordinates carry important treasures of the Kingdom of Hanmu.

"Not too many men left. 100% chance of success." Shaq looked at Louis' men. He had already made his decision.

## Chapter 13

"Prince Shaq, thank you once again for your assistance. Let us part ways here."  
Prince Louis said with a smile.

Shaq's face immediately turned stern. Unhappily, he said, "Prince Louis, what's the rush? Right now, this area is covered with magical beasts, and you only have seven people left. If you meet any more magical beasts on the road, it'll be very dangerous. Come along with us. With our combined strength, we will be safer as well."

Prince Louis hurriedly said, "Prince Shaq, no..."

"Don't refuse. Otherwise, I'll get angry." Shaq said with a stern, angry look.

Prince Louis looked very awkward, but in his heart, he was furious. He, Prince Louis, wasn't an idiot. He knew that his subordinates' earlier actions of collecting off the bags of the deceased had aroused suspicion.

It was true.

The bags of his subordinates contained the major treasures of the royal clan of the Kingdom of Hanmu. The royal clan of Hanmu had been in existence for over a thousand years. Although its history wasn't as long as that of the royal clan of Fenlai, it still possessed an astonishing amount of wealth and major treasures. However, their royal clan didn't have any interspatial rings, and so they had to carry their treasures with them.

Actually, in such a chaotic period, the various noble clans of Fenlai and Hanmu had all thrown their valuables and magiccrystal cards in bags and fled. The number of people in the entire continent who had interspatial rings was very low. Even a powerful entity such as the Proulx Gallery had only one, belonging to Managing Director Maia.

"This Shaq is full of bad intentions." Louis was extremely worried.

He wanted to refuse, but he was afraid that Shaq really would have a falling out with him.

A knight by the side of Prince Louis nudged him, then stepped forward. This knight was the instructor for Prince Louis. "Since Prince Shaq is so sincere, then we shall travel alongside your squad. Only, we're sorry to have troubled you, Prince Shaq."

"No trouble at all. Haha, let's go together." Shaq laughed loudly.

Just judging from appearances alone, this two-meter tall, burly man looked like a foolish boor. But having grown up in the royal clan, how could Shaq truly be

foolish? He, too, could guess what the other party was thinking. Nonetheless, he led everyone travelling north.

“Boss, the atmosphere seems really weird.” Bebe said mentally to Linley.

Linley laughed inwardly. That Prince Louis didn’t dare to offend Prince Shaq too much, but he had to be careful so as to prevent Prince Shaq from acting against him. Naturally, this expedition became rather...special. Watching both sides, Linley knew exactly what was going on.

After chatting for a while with Prince Louis, Prince Shaq separated, then rode over to Linley. In a low voice, he said, “Lord Linley, did you see?”

“See? See what?” Linley looked at Shaq.

After making sure that no one belonging to Prince Louis was nearby, Prince Shaq said in a low voice, “The royal clan of Hanmu is in flight. They surely took with them many of the major treasures they accumulated over their thousand years of existence. In my estimation, those knights’ bags are all filled with major treasures.” Linley knew that the existence of the Golden Bank of the Four Empires had made magicrystal cards quite popular.

Even large clans and royal clans used magicrystal cards. To these clans who possessed hundreds of millions of gold coins in wealth, most treasures weren’t a big deal. For example, when they were fleeing, these nobles couldn’t be bothered to bring something like Blueheart Grass, which was worth 100,000 gold coins.

The only things they would take were the most important treasures, all worth over a million gold coins, such as magicite cores of magical beasts of the ninth rank or of the Saint-level, or perhaps treasures from other planes. Or divine artifacts...

“Lord Linley, as long as you are willing to assist, when we divide the treasures, naturally you will have a share as well. No. Two shares. What do you say? In my view, those treasures must be worth several million gold coins at least.” Shaq said in a low voice.

Shaq knew very well what an astonishing amount of wealth a royal clan possessed. Because in his own hands, there were five hundred million gold coins in magicrystal cards.

The Kingdom of Hanmu wasn’t inferior to the Kingdom of Fenlai. They probably possessed the same amount of wealth. How could the major treasures they carried out be of low quality?

"Fine." Linley nodded. "When you plan to make your move, notify me as to what you wish."

Hearing this, Shaq was extremely excited.

Perhaps when they were fleeing, magi were hindrances, but when they were able to engage in a battle, their power was astonishing. Linley was a dual-element magus of the seventh rank. With their opponents totally caught off-guard, he alone could probably kill half of them.

Linley carefully inspected those seven people on Prince Louis' side. Right now, each of them were carrying four or five bags. In particular...

"Hrm?"

Linley suddenly noticed that the sound of hoof steps of one middle-aged man's horse was particularly loud. In addition, that horse seemed more tired than the other horses as well. More importantly, that middle-aged man had another horse running alongside him! He had two horses to himself!

Clearly, this middle-aged man needed to frequently change horses.

"These horses are both fine horses. Even if they were carrying three or four people, they would gallop like the wind. Why would this middle-aged man cause these horses to be so tired, to the point where he would have to frequently change horses?" Linley instantly understood the reason.

This middle-aged man was very heavy.

Or, to put it another way, the things he was carrying was very heavy. "But this middle-aged man is only carrying a short sword. Can it be that within his bags..." Linley's only explanation was that the four bags the middle-aged man was carrying included something extremely heavy.

The wind howled.

Both Prince Louis' and Prince Shaq's men had retired for the night. No matter how strong one was, they would still need rest. Prince Louis' and his six warriors all rested together, while Prince Shaq's men were divided into four or five units. These two forces were located in separate areas.

"Master, when should we leave?" Prince Louis said in a soft voice. The other five men were all feigning sleep.

“Wait a bit longer. When they’ve all fallen asleep, we’ll mount and leave.” That middle-aged man said quietly.

Fleeing into the dark night was a very common strategy. It was a common strategy because many people used it...and many people used it because it was effective!

The thirty people on Prince Shaq’s side were feigning sleep as well. Not a single one of them was truly asleep. Everyone knew that there would be a battle they had to fight tonight.

“Lord Linley.” Prince Shaq was by Linley’s side. He called out to Linley in a soft voice.

“Hrm?” Linley turned to look at Shaq.

Prince Shaq continued, “Lord Linley, prepare to secretly cast a magic spell. This will catch them off-guard and make them suffer heavy losses. And then, my squad will charge over and finish them off. Lord Linley, it’s up to you now.”

“Fine.” Linley nodded.

A sudden sneak attack via magic at night was something which opponents definitely would not be able to foresee.

Linley’s lips began to move slightly as he quietly began to chant the words to a magical spell. By his side, Prince Shaq could only wait impatiently. Poor Prince Louis and his men actually wanted to wait a while longer and flee after Prince Shaq and his men had fallen asleep.

“Swish! Swish! Swish!”

In a circular area with a radius of ten meters, dozens of sharp earthen spears suddenly jutted out of the ground. “Ah!” A series of agonized screams sounded out as those sharp earthen spears suddenly pierced through those warriors’ bodies, and one of them was directly impaled through and through. That poor Prince Louis was instantly killed as well by those spears. He was, after all, the weakest person amongst them.

The thickly clustered array of earthen spears was enough to freeze one’s heart.

Earth-style magic of the seventh rank – Earthen Spear Array.

Four of the seven people in Prince Louis' party died in agony on the spot, while the three remaining warriors of the eighth rank suffered serious injuries as well, due to being caught off-guard.

"Kill!"

The thirty members of the Wildthunder squad were previously feigning sleep, but hearing those miserable screams, they all charged towards the other camp as though they had received orders. They immediately attacked those three wounded warriors of the eighth rank, in a thirty against three fight.

This wasn't a fair contest at all. What's more, the Wildthunder squad had ten warriors of the eighth rank.

"Slice." "Slice."

Those three wounded warriors of the eighth rank were easily killed. They were barely able to resist at all.

"Second Prince, all of them are dead now." The captain of the Wildthunder squad, an energetic, golden-haired middle-aged man reported.

Shaq was overjoyed. "Haha, wonderful! Quick, bring those bags over to me. For this action alone, I will award all of you a hundred thousand gold coins. When we reunite with my royal father, I will disburse the gold." Shaq was extremely excited.

There were thirty people in the Wildthunder squad. A hundred thousand gold coins each was only a total of three million gold coins. But the wealth contained within those ten bags surely was worth more than a hundred million gold coins.

"Come, Lord Linley. You pick two bags first." Shaq said very magnanimously to Linley.

The usefulness of a magus in pitched group battles had been totally put on display. This sneak attack by magic of Linley's had killed four and heavily injured the remaining three. If Shaq had ordered his men to directly attack, quite a few of them probably would've died.

Linley walked directly over to Prince Louis' master's corpse, the middle-aged man. He hefted each of the four bags. As he did so, Linley indeed noticed something strange. Three of the bags were very light, very ordinary.

But the last bag...it seemed very small, and the object inside was only the size of a man's palm, but its weight...was over a thousand pounds.



“Something the size of a hand but over a thousand pounds in weight?”

Linley was stunned.

He had never heard of anything this dense and heavy. Even gold and diamonds were much lighter than this material. The size of a hand, but over a thousand pounds...

“Lord Linley?” Shaq walked over. “Have you chosen?”

“No need to choose. I’ll just go with these two.” Linley randomly grabbed another bag from the remaining three, then slung the two bags over his back.

Seeing this, Shaq felt very happy as well. What he worried about the most was that Linley would open every single bag to take a look inside, then make his decision. This would be quite unfair to him. But Linley had just casually hefted the bags on a single person, then chose two of them.

All of Shaq’s subordinates were now carrying bags.

“Let’s go.” Shaq was now in a wonderful mood.

Linley was riding on a horse as well, but while riding the horse, Linley had cast the Floating Technique on himself. Given his power as a magus of the seventh rank, using a spell of the fifth rank was extremely easy. Linley used the levitational powers of the Floating Technique to counteract the extra weight of that mysterious object.

This allowed the horse he was riding to continue galloping without strain.

“Grandpa Doehring.” Linley immediately pressed him. “Take a look and see what I have inside these two new bags of mine?”

“Oh, you got some treasures?” Doehring Cowart, who had been napping inside the Coiling Dragon ring, was suddenly full of energy. He immediately used his spiritual energy to directly sense what was inside Linley’s two bags.

“Within that first bag is a brocade box wrapped in several layers of cloth. Inside the box there is a matching pair of beautiful jade crystals. They should have quite the history, but I don’t know where they are from.” Doehring Cowart said.

“The second bag...ah?!”

Doehring Cowart cried out in surprise. “What is it?” Linley’s heart clenched in excitement. He knew that the second bag had to be the one containing the strange

item weighing over a thousand pounds, because the item inside the second bag wasn't a perfectly rectangular box.

"Adamantine. Adamantine ore. There's actually a fist-sized chunk of adamantine ore in the Yulan continent. This...this is astonishing." Doehring Cowart said in amazement.

Hearing the words 'adamantine', Linley's heart clenched yet again. Adamantine didn't actually exist in the material plane. It only came from other planes, and it was so tough and durable that supposedly even most Deity-level combatants couldn't easily break it. When he was jailed in the Radiant Temple, that lock with some adamantine alloyed into it would've been hard for even a Saint-level combatant to break. From this, one could tell how tough adamantine was.

"A fist-sized chunk of adamantine ore. This...this is more valuable than even a Saint-level magicite core. How could there be such a huge chunk in the world?" Doehring Cowart simply couldn't believe it.

"A fist-sized chunk is 'huge'?" Linley was rather confused.

## Chapter 14

Doehring Cowart was rendered momentarily speechless by Linley's question.

"Linley, I must tell you, if a weapon has just a little bit of adamantine alloyed into it, the weapon's durability will increase to a very high level. If a weapon were to be totally made out of adamantine, even if you gave it to a Saint-level combatant and let him try to break it, he wouldn't be able to scratch it, no matter how long he tried."

Doehring Cowart was very resigned.

Linley clearly didn't fully appreciate how valuable adamantine was.

"Then, Grandpa Doehring, can I use this adamantine to forge a 'heavy sword'?" After listening to Doehring Cowart previously explain the benefits to using heavy weapons, Linley wanted to acquire a heavy sword of his own. Originally, Linley was planning to spend some money and buy a good one. But now that he had this chunk of 'adamantine', naturally he had to put it to good use.

Right now, Linley didn't lack for money.

“Forge a heavy sword with adamantine? A heavy sword is rather large, and will most likely need this chunk of adamantine to be mixed with some other metals. But of course, I don’t know anything about blacksmithing myself. However, I have heard that forging weapons out of adamantine is extremely difficult. Adamantine is extremely tough. Most master weaponsmiths are not capable of melting and reforging it.” Doehring Cowart chuckled.

Linley nodded to himself.

Adamantine was a material which even Deity-level combatants supposedly would find tough to break. But since it was possible for adamantine to be forged into a weapon, naturally there had to be a special technique for it as well. Only, the technique was probably too difficult.

“Got it.” Linley nodded.

....

Linley and Second Prince Shaq continued speeding northwards, and the farther north they went, the sparser the magical beasts became. After travelling another three or four hundred kilometers without a single magical beast appearing, they reached an area where the local cities and towns hadn’t had any people die.

But these villages and towns were very sparsely populated. Most likely, people were afraid of the danger and had moved northwards as well.

“Haha, good, it seems the Kingdom of Hess hasn’t fallen.” Shaq laughed loudly. “It’s been quite a few days. Finally we can rest.”

Shaq looked at Linley.

Seated on his horse, Linley seemed as solid and unmovable as an old oak, not wavering in the slightest, seeming very stable. His face was calm, and he had been silent, giving him a reliable, taciturn aura. Towards Linley, Shaq had always felt a hint of dread. Although he was a few years older than Linley, he always respectfully addressed Linley as ‘Master Linley’.

“Master Linley, look. That’s a military camp up ahead.” Shaq and Linley were riding side by side.

Linley nodded.

The Radiant Church had clearly decided to set up a line of defense here at the borders of the Kingdom of Hess. Seeing those countless military camps lining the border, one could tell how many soldiers had been deployed here.

“Two kingdoms and five duchies lost. That’s about a third of the territory of the Holy Union. I expect the Radiant Church isn’t willing to retreat any further.” Linley chuckled. Linley and the knights made their way through the guarded pass, and were quickly allowed in.

This guarded pass was to defend against magical beasts.

Naturally, no humans would be denied entry.

“Second Prince, shall we rest here?” Linley seemed very tranquil.

“The city of Hess is one of the agreed upon places that my royal father and I settled upon. We still have around three hundred kilometers before arriving at Hess City. If we hurry, we should be able to reach there by nightfall today.” Shaq said unguardedly.

“Hess City!”

Linley memorized this name. “Clayde. Hess City shall be where you die.”

.....

They continued their journey. Linley, Shaq, and the thirty mounted knights kicked up a trail of dust in their wake. By the time Linley and Shaq saw the city of Hess, the sun was just setting, casting its red glow upon the earth.

“Hess City, the capital of the Kingdom of Hess. It’s only slightly smaller than Fenlai City.” Seeing the silhouettes of the enormous city walls, Linley couldn’t help but be awed.

How much manpower had it taken to erect such giant walls?

Arriving at the gate to Hess City, Linley and his squad found their way barred.

“Dismount!” A gate guard of Hess City ordered in a loud voice.

“Why should we dismount?” Shaq shouted back angrily.

The gate guard saw that Shaq’s group was definitely an extraordinary one, and thus answered the question. “His Highness has ordered that no horses may be ridden within the boundaries of Hess City. Everyone, right now Hess City is overflowing

with people. There's simply not enough space to ride horses. It's best if you all dismount."

"Let's dismount." Linley smiled at Shaq.

Shaq nodded.

Linley and Shaq could both imagine that many people had fled here from the two ruined kingdoms and the six destroyed duchies. Most likely many of the people living near Hess City had fled here as well. Those two kingdoms and six duchies possessed a combined population of hundreds of millions.

Even if 90% had died, millions would have survived. And of course, there had been no magical beast sightings within hundreds of kilometers of the Kingdom of Hess, so virtually all of the people who lived in that area had survived.

"So many people."

Stepping into Hess City, Linley and Shaq and the knights were all shocked. Hess City normally could only accommodate at most a million people. But by Linley's calculations, right now there were at least several million people within the city, because every single street was clogged. Even in the city of Fenlai, Linley had never seen anything like this.

"Go find a hotel first, then come back here to pick me up." Shaq immediately ordered his men to go reserve a hotel suite.

"Lord Linley, let's go eat dinner first." Shaq said with a laugh, and of course Linley wouldn't refuse. Shaq immediately led Linley and the others to a nearby restaurant. The bottom floor of this restaurant was full, but there were still dining rooms available in the upper levels.

"Three rooms." Shaq said magnanimously.

But when they sat down and Shaq saw the prices on the menu, he was somewhat flabbergasted. Shaq grabbed the nearest waiter and shouted angrily, "Do you take me for an idiot? With prices like this, a table of dishes would cost several thousand gold coins. You are trying to cheat me!"

Although this restaurant was a high class one, Shaq, as a prince, had naturally been to many high class restaurants.

For a restaurant of this class, a hundred gold coins a table was generally more than enough.

"Milord, if you don't wish to eat, you can leave." The waiter seemed very confident. "Right now, Hess City is filled to the brim with people, including countless nobles who fled here with their valuables. All of them demand high quality service and are willing to pay for it."

Shaq was instantly stunned by these words.

Right. The people who had managed to flee from the two kingdoms and the three duchies most likely all belonged to powerful clans or were powerful combatants themselves. Those powerful clans naturally wouldn't penny-pinch.

"Hmph."

Shaq snorted, but still placed his orders in the end. After Shaq and Linley had finished eating their meals...

"Your Highness, Second Prince." The people who had gone looking for a hotel came back.

"And? Have you found a place?" Shaq asked.

That guard shook his head. "All of the rooms in the major hotels have been booked. Although we only went to five large hotels, we could already tell this wouldn't work. There were too many people trying to make reservations. Your Highness, we arrived at Hess City too late. The members of the clans belonging to the five duchies and the Kingdom of Hanmu arrived much faster than us."

Shaq nodded.

"Sit and eat first." Shaq turned to look at another guard, one with short jade hair. "Are you full yet? If you are, help me find a manor and buy it. I expect the prices here within Hess City will be quite high, but no matter how pricy it is, buy it. Remember, though; don't buy something which is too gaudy and too large. This manor will only be a temporary lodging place for myself and my royal father."

"Yes, your Highness." The guard acknowledged, and then left to find a manor.

Linley quietly drank his wine, watching everything.

"A manor? I wonder which manor it will be. When Clayde comes, most likely he will head to that manor as well." By finding out the place where Clayde was going to stay, all he would need to do was lie in wait. When the opportunity came, he would send Clayde to his death.

.....

Hess City. A very ordinary manor on Keyan Road.

Under normal conditions, a manor in Hess City like this which was not located in the city center would generally be worth two or three hundred thousand gold coins. But Prince Shaq had to pay a million gold coins just to buy it. A large number of nobles and magnates had entered Hess City, causing inflation to skyrocket.

That night.

Linley also stayed in this manor for now.

"That Clayde, after he comes, should be residing in one of these two or three rooms." Linley was walking in the middle of the manor, carefully inspecting its internal layout. He was making preparations for killing Clayde in the future.

The night wind was cool and refreshing, but Linley ignored it, only paying attention to the location and layout of every part of this manor.

"Lord Linley, why haven't you rested yet?" That enchanting consort said to Linley in a soft voice, standing in the doorway to her room.

"Found being in my room to be too stuffy. Thought I'd get some fresh air." Linley replied casually.

"I also feel it's rather stuffy." That consort walked out of her room towards Linley. Her coquettish gaze only made Linley feel apprehensive, and he immediately said, "Then Royal Consort, you should get some air. I'll go back to my room and get some rest now." After he spoke, Linley immediately left.

Watching Linley leave, the consort couldn't help but let out a little hmpf of displeasure.

....

The next morning.

"Second Prince, Royal Consort, Princess. I have some things to take care of, so I'll leave now." Linley bid his farewells.

"Lord Linley, why are you in such a rush to leave? Wait for my royal father to come back first, then decide." Shaq immediately tried to convince him to stay.

Linley laughed coldly inside. "Wait for your royal father? If Clayde saw that I was living here, I probably would have to openly attack and kill him. The chance of killing him openly is lower than assassinating him." Linley had already had enough setbacks.

This time, Linley wanted to be absolutely certain of success.

"This time, I'll have to endure and be patient. I'll wait for the moment when Clayde and Kaiser aren't together. When Clayde is alone, I'll kill him. That will definitely be successful." Linley knew that so long as Kaiser was there, he wouldn't be able to kill Clayde quickly.

But as long as Kaiser was not present, he definitely would succeed.

"Then where are you going, Lord Linley?" Shaq asked.

"I plan to leave Hess City and continue north. As for where exactly, I'm not yet sure." Linley replied. "Alright. Second Prince, Royal Consort, Princess. I bid you farewell."

Bowing slightly, Linley led Bebe away from the manor.

.....

That very night, Linley moved into a small courtyard on the same street as Shaq's manor. The manor which Shaq had bought took up a large amount of space, enough to very comfortably fit thirty people. But the house which Linley bought was very small, only enough for three or four people.

This little courtyard had still cost Linley 50,000 gold coins. In normal times, a few thousand coins would have been enough.

"Ah Da, Ah Er, have you seen anyone new enter the manor?" Linley was seated at his dinner table as he asked these two men.

"No."

Linley had casually picked these two men up from the streets for his employ. Right now, in Hess City, there were many commoners as well as nobles. After fleeing here, those commoners had no food to eat and place to live. All they could do was beg or do manual labor. Thus, it was easy for Linley to find people to work for him. A salary of two gold coins each day, with food and board included, was an opportunity which any of these impoverished refugees would have fought for.

Linley saw that these two men seemed the reliable sort, and so had chosen them.



"At night, you can sleep, but by day, keep a close watch. As long as any strangers enter the manor, especially in large numbers, you have to inform me. Pay special attention to a man who has only one hand." Linley repeated his instructions.

There was no need to keep a watch at night, because the gates to Hess City were barred shut at night.

And Linley was confident that with two people watching during the day, as long as Clayde's men arrived, he would definitely find out. Shaq and his people believed that Linley had really left the city, but in reality, Linley continued his watch from a courtyard very near them.

"Clayde, I'll just keep waiting here for as long as it takes. Let's see how long it takes you to get here." Linley's gaze was cold.

Seeing the look on Linley's face, those two brothers shuddered.

"Go." Linley ordered.

"Yes, milord."

## Chapter 15

A sky-blue magus robe and a magistaff in hand.

This was how Linley was dressed now as he walked on the streets.

On this outing, Bebe had stayed behind in the little courtyard on Keyan Road. Linley's instructions were for Bebe to instantly tell him once Clayde appeared. Given the soul link between Linley and Bebe, no matter how far apart they were, they would be able to sense each other's thoughts.

Today, Linley had made this outing for the sake of his 'heavy sword'.

"Hrm?" Linley noticed a weapons shop nearby and immediately went inside.

The weapons shop's business was quite average. There were only two customers inside inspecting the various weapons. Linley went straight to the counter and asked calmly, "In Hess City, who is the best weaponsmith around?"

The store clerk glanced at Linley. Realizing he was a magus, the shopkeeper immediately said courteously, "Milord magus, the master blacksmith of our shop possesses very high skills. There's no weapon that he cannot forge."

"My question was, in Hess City, who is the best blacksmith around?" Linley's face turned cold. "If your so-called master blacksmith is unable to produce the weapon I need, don't blame me when I wreck your shop."

The store clerk was frightened by Linley's words. Previously, he had wanted to try and win a customer, but now he no longer dared to make any rash claims. "Milord magus, the number one blacksmith of Hess City resides in West Hess City. His name is Master Corby [Ke'er'bi], and his weapons shop is quite close to the Radiant Temple."

"Corby?" Linley memorized this name. He immediately left.

"But milord magus." That store clerk said in a quiet voice.

"Hrm?" Linley turned his head to look at the clerk, curious what he had to say.

The store clerk said respectfully, "Milord magus, if you want a good magistaff, you should go to a magic weapons store. These weapons are all meant for warriors to choose from." In the eyes of this store clerk, it was very strange indeed for a magus to not only want a weapon, but to want one made by a master blacksmith.

The weapon of a magus was his magistaff.

And in order to produce a magistaff, one needed high skills in alchemy.

Linley's lips curved upwards in a smile, and he left the weapons store.

Half an hour later, Linley arrived near the Radiant Temple in the west part of the city. Based on Linley's investigations, the Holy Emperor of the Radiant Church and the other Saint-level combatants hadn't arrived in Hess City yet. Supposedly, only a single Cardinal had arrived here, but to better assist the ruler of the Kingdom of Hess, he had taken residence along with the soldiers at the border.

As for where that group of Saint-level combatants of the Radiant Church had gone, no one knew.

"I really hope that 'King' of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts killed a few of those Saint-levels." Linley secretly said to himself. The Holy Emperor Heidens had used the Divine Baptism against Linley. Although Linley didn't know what exactly

it had been meant to do, he knew that the divine power of it had tried to merge into his very soul.

His soul.

This was the most important core of a person. Linley was certain that Heidens had been up to no good.

“This is the weapons store of the so-called number one blacksmith in Hess City?” Linley glanced at the weapons store. The store was tens of meters long, and on each side of the door there were two powerfully built warriors in beautifully wrought armor standing guard, weapons in hand.

This weapons store did indeed seem quite impressive. Clearly, it was much better than the store which Linley had gone into just a while earlier.

Entering the weapons store, Linley saw that the attendant was a beautiful young woman. The woman’s eyes lit up when she saw how Linley was dressed, and she courteously said, “Milord magus, what sort of weapon do you desire? Come with me. We have all sorts of beautiful court rapiers.”

Linley chuckled with resignation.

It seemed this woman thought that he was nothing more than a magus who wanted a weapon to play around with.

“I heard your Master Corby is here?” Linley said directly to the woman.

The attendant nodded. “Right. Master Corby is the head blacksmith here, and he is definitely the number one blacksmith within the city of Hess. I’ve never heard of Master Corby being unable to forge a weapon of any sort.”

“Oh? Have Master Corby come out. I wish for him to make me a weapon.” Linley said immediately.

“Have...have Master Corby come out?” The attendant laughed awkwardly. “Milord magus, Master Corby never comes out to meet with customers. If you wish to meet with Master Corby, you’ll have to go find him yourself. And...if you want to meet Master Corby, you need to spend some money, as otherwise, he won’t meet with you.”

Linley had to admit that this man really did know how to put on airs.

“Fine. How much money for me to go meet him?” Linley asked directly.

"Not much. Fifty gold coins." The attendant said.

Fifty gold coins was nothing to those members of rich clans, but this price was enough for a commoner to survive off of for a year or two.

"Fifty?" Linley withdrew a sack of gold from his clothes. This sack contained a hundred pieces of gold. Linley poured out fifty, then instructed, "Lead the way." Linley usually only carried a hundred gold coins on him. He had magicrystal cards on him, after all. If he needed any more, he could go withdraw it.

"Yes, milord magus." The attendant was extremely happy.

....

Five minutes later, guided by the attendant, Linley arrived at a very plain-looking residence. The guard to the residence clearly was familiar with the attendant, and let them in immediately.

When Linley saw Master Corby, the man was reclining on a chair while sipping a cup of tea. This Corby's hair was totally white, but the powerful muscles bulging from his body showed that he was still a powerful warrior.

Most weaponsmiths were extremely powerful warriors.

"Master Corby, this lord magus wishes to meet with you." The attendant said respectfully.

Corby glanced at Linley and laughed. "Youngster, my fees are quite high. If you want me to forge a weapon for you, at the very least it will cost you ten thousand gold coins."

Linley could sense this Master Corby's approximate level of power.

If he wasn't a warrior of the seventh rank, then he was one of the eighth.

"Fine." Linley nodded. "But this weapon will use special materials. Right. Can the other people here leave?"

"Of course." Master Corby nodded at his servants, who immediately left.

Master Corby looked at Linley curiously. "Youngster, what special materials do you bring?"

"Adamantine." Linley said directly.

Previously sitting lazily on his chair, Master Corby suddenly shot to his feet as though thunderstruck. He stared at Linley in amazement. "What did you just say? Adamantine? Did I hear you correctly?" Adamantine was a material that appeared only in legends. He, Corby, had been a weaponsmith his entire life, but hadn't seen any.

"Right. I intend to use adamantine to forge a weapon. Are you capable of doing so?" Linley looked expectantly at Master Corby.

Master Corby hesitated for a moment, but in the end, he sighed and said, "Youngster, I actually do not have the ability to smith adamantine." Hearing these words, Linley couldn't help but feel disappointed.

"Youngster, can...can you show the adamantine to me?" Corby said somewhat awkwardly.

Linley could understand the desire of a master blacksmith like Corby to see adamantine with his own eyes. He immediately removed the adamantine chunk from his bag and handed it over to Master Corby. This thousand-pound chunk of adamantine didn't seem to be heavy at all to Linley.

However, when the totally unprepared Master Corby accepted the chunk of adamantine, his hand couldn't help but sink down.

"It really is heavy." Master Corby recovered and easily lifted it back up.

But Corby still glanced at Linley in surprise. For this Linley to be able to hold this heavy chunk of adamantine so easily meant that he was at least a warrior of the sixth rank.

"Adamantine. Having seen it, I'm satisfied." Corby stared lovingly at the chunk of adamantine, but in the end he returned it to Linley. In truth, Corby did feel a hint of greed and desire for it, but he knew that for Linley to so casually hand it to him meant that Linley wasn't worried at all about being unable to get it back.

What's more, Corby also knew that he didn't have the ability to smith this adamantine chunk.

"Master Corby, do you know who is capable of smithing adamantine?" Linley asked.

Corby considered for a moment. "From what I know, the Radiant Church has specialized master weaponsmiths. The Radiant Church has a long history and it should possess the techniques needed to smith adamantine. I expect that the master

weaponsmiths belonging to the Four Great Empires and to the Cult of Shadows should all be in possession of such techniques as well."

Linley nodded.

"Farewell, then." Linley left, somewhat disappointed.

Linley knew from the beginning that adamantine wasn't so easily smelted, and so he had made some mental preparations. Departing from this location, he headed back towards his own residence. But halfway back, Linley suddenly heard a familiar voice.

"Third Bro."

Linley immediately turned his head to look.

Yale, George, and Reynolds were staring back at him in astonishment.

"Boss Yale. Second Bro. Fourth Bro." Linley immediately ran over excitedly. He didn't expect to be able to meet with his dear bros again. Under Yale's invitation, Linley decided to go to the Dawson Conglomerate's headquarters to have a good meal with his bros.

Within a very secluded manor.

Linley, Yale, Reynolds, and George were all happily exchanging stories of recent events.

"You want to find a master weaponsmith? Mm, I don't know any either." Yale shook his head.

Reynolds said questioningly, "Third Bro, you said adamantine? What is adamantine?"

Neither Reynolds, nor Yale, nor George had ever heard of adamantine.

Adamantine was simply too rare and too precious.

"Linley, we just barely had a chance to meet last time. Only today do I have the opportunity to have a good chat with a genius like you." Monroe Dawson walked in from the main hall, holding his big belly and chuckling. "Hey, did you just say adamantine?"

Linley nodded. "Lord Chairman, I managed to acquire some adamantine and plan to use it to forge a weapon. But I'm not able to find a master weaponsmith capable of forging it."

"Oh."

What sort of a person was Monroe Dawson? How could he not know what adamantine was? "You actually address me as Chairman? You and Yale are like brothers! Just call me Uncle. You say you need to find a master weaponsmith who can smelt adamantine? I happen to know one."

Linley actually didn't feel too excited upon hearing this.

Because even if Monroe Dawson knew a person, that person most likely wasn't in the city of Hess.

"Uncle Monroe, who is that master weaponsmith?" Linley asked.

Monroe Dawson grinned. "That master weaponsmith is known as Master Vincente [Wei'lin'te], the leader of the Hyde clan."

"Vincente?" Linley was a bit curious.

Suddenly, Linley started. "Uncle Dawson, what clan did you just say he belonged to?"

"The Hyde clan." Monroe Dawson replied with a chortle.

Linley had totally memorized that book he had read back in his clan's manor which introduced the Four Supreme Warriors. One piece of information included within was the clan names of the Four Supreme Warriors. The Violetflame Warriors clan...was the Hyde clan! However...there was more than one clan named 'Hyde', and thus this Hyde clan wasn't necessarily the clan of the Violetflame Warriors.

"You thought of them? Haha. Right. This Hyde clan is just like your Baruch clan. They are a clan of Supreme Warriors. The Hyde clan lived within a small city in the Holy Union's Kingdom of Hanmu. After this catastrophe, they fled here to Hess City." Monroe Dawson said with a laugh.

"They are here in Hess City?" Linley was surprised.

"And they are living right next to my manor. I personally arranged for them to be put there." Monroe Dawson continued.

Linley stared at Monroe Dawson in astonishment.

Actually, Monroe Dawson knew several people who were capable of smelting adamantine. The master weaponsmith of the Dawson Conglomerate was capable of smelting adamantine as well. But none of those other people whom Monroe Dawson knew were currently in Hess City. Thus, Monroe Dawson only mentioned this one person.

## Chapter 16

Linley was in a dire need of a good weapon, and so Monroe Dawson decided to immediately take Linley to Master Vincente. Monroe Dawson, Linley, Yale, George, and Reynolds all went in a group to a dwelling not too far away.

“Lord Chairman!” The guard at the entrance immediately bowed respectfully upon seeing Monroe Dawson.

The servants and guards of the Hyde clan had been personally arranged for by Monroe Dawson. They all belonged to the Dawson Conglomerate to begin with.

“Lord Dawson has arrived?” A middle-aged man who had been quietly lying in rest in the front courtyard instantly scrambled to his feet and walked over. His face filled with gratitude, he said, “Lord Dawson, if you want to see me, all you have to do is send someone for me. I would just come to your place.”

This Vincente truly did feel grateful towards Monroe Dawson.

In this past half year, Monroe Dawson had been extremely friendly and courteous towards his Hyde clan, but hadn’t required anything of them. In particular, when they had fled for their lives, if the Dawson Conglomerate hadn’t assisted them while they were in the Kingdom of Hanmu, perhaps many more members of the Hyde clan would have died.

“Haha, let’s talk inside.” Monroe Dawson slapped Vincente on the shoulders.

“Alright.”

Other members of the Hyde clan, such as Vincente’s father, and Vincente’s two sons all came out.

“Come, Mr. Vincente, let me make some introductions.” Monroe Dawson beamed as he pointed at Linley. “The three of you should already know my son, but this one here is that genius magus I have often mentioned to you. He is...”



“Linley of the Baruch clan, a master sculptor and a genius magus.” Vincente continued.

Vincente turned his eyes to Linley. Even Vincente’s father and his two children turned to stare at Linley in awe.

“Linley, I imagine you know about our Hyde clan.” There was a very special sentiment visible in Vincente’s eyes. Although both the Hyde clan and the Baruch clan had decayed in power over the years, in their heart, they were filled with pride and a certain type of arrogance.

The clans of the Four Supreme Warriors had five thousand years of history!

No matter how far they had fallen, this sort of innate pride and arrogance sprung from their hearts.

Two descendants of two Supreme Warrior clans looked at each other, sharing a very special moment.

“The Violetflame Warrior clan.” Linley said modestly. “In the books passed down within our Baruch clan, there are careful descriptions regarding the Hyde clan, one of our fellow Supreme Warrior clans.”

Hearing these words, Vincente couldn’t help but feel as though he had been given quite a bit of face, and felt all the more well-disposed towards Linley. “Linley, let me introduce you. This is my eldest son, Yotian [Yu’xing] Hyde. This is my second son, Trey [Te’lei] Hyde.” Vincente clearly was very proud of his sons. “Linley, my two sons are quite talented as well. But of course, compared to you, they have quite a distance to go.”

Yotian and Trey only nodded, but from the fierce look in their eyes, they clearly didn’t submit to their father’s claims that the two brothers were a bit inferior to Linley.

“Haha, alright, Mr. Vincente. I’ve come today to ask you for your help.” Monroe Dawson said directly.

Vincente immediately said magnanimously, “Lord Dawson, if you need anything, just tell me. As long as I am capable, I will definitely do my best.” In this past half year, the Dawson Conglomerate had helped the Hyde clan out in many matters. But the Hyde clan hadn’t been able to repay them at all. After all, the Dawson Conglomerate hadn’t asked them to do anything.

The feeling of owing someone wasn’t a good one.

Monroe Dawson laughed while gesturing at Linley. "Linley wants a good weapon. I want to ask you to be the one to forge it for him."

"Forge a weapon?" Vincente looked at Linley. "Linley, a weapon for yourself?"

"Yes." Linley nodded.

A gratified look was in Vincente's eyes. Nodding, he said, "Right. We descendants of the Four Supreme Warriors can't be physically puny and weak. We must train as warriors, and naturally we must have a fine weapon. Tell me, what sort of weapon do you desire!"

Both Vincente, and his two sons, upon hearing that Linley was a magus genius, felt a bit of disdain towards him in their hearts. In their eyes, the Four Supreme Warriors descendants should be powerful, invincible warriors. Now that Linley was asking them to help him make a weapon, they felt very happy.

"A heavy sword." Linley said slowly. "Mr. Vincente, I am 1.9 meters tall. You decide how long the heavy sword should be. You should know what length would be most suitable to someone of my height."

Vincente was a bit surprised. "A heavy sword? Not a greatsword or a warblade?"

Greatswords and heavy swords were two different types of weapons. "A heavy sword." Linley said with certainty.

"Alright. Any other requests?" Vincente was the leader of the Hyde clan. The descendants of the Hyde clan weren't just powerful warriors; they were all extremely skilled blacksmiths as well.

Linley removed the bag he was carrying. "The materials for the heavy sword must include this."

From within the bag, Linley withdrew that fist-sized chunk of adamantine ore.

Just by looking at it, Vincente couldn't tell that this was adamantine. After all, even Vincente had never seen adamantine before. He immediately asked curiously, "What is this ore called?"

"Adamantine."

Linley replied directly.

"Adamantine?!" Vincente, his father, and his two sons all stared in astonishment at the fist-sized chunk of black rock in Linley's hands.

Vincente suppressed the excitement in his heart. Looking at Linley, he said, "Can you let me take a look?"

"Yes."

Vincente carefully accepted the chunk of adamantine. Although he had never seen adamantine before, Vincente knew that adamantine was extremely heavy, and so he had prepared himself for it. Indeed...

"At least a thousand pounds." Vincente's eyes shone. "Indeed. Adamantine is over a hundred times heavier than gold. The legends are true."

Vincente suddenly came to his senses, and he stared at Linley in astonishment. "Linley, you want to use this entire chunk of adamantine in the forging of your heavy sword?"

"Right. All of it." Linley replied.

Vincente shook his head repeatedly. "Linley, this adamantine ore is a thousand pounds by itself. Using adamantine as the base, the other materials you will need to alloy it with will have to be of high quality as well. Given the size of your heavy sword, it will most likely weigh nearly three thousand pounds. This will be my first time forging such a heavy sword. Three thousand pounds! You want it for yourself? Even most warriors of the seventh rank won't be able to use it freely. Even a warrior of the eighth rank will be slowed down by it, despite being able to wield it with ease."

"Mr. Vincente, just worry about the forging." Linley laughed.

Dragonblood Warriors were immensely strong, physically. Comparatively speaking, in terms of battle-qi, Dragonblood battle-qi was a bit weaker.

Of the Four Supreme Warriors, the Dragonblood Warriors and the Undying Warriors possessed greater strength. The founder of the Baruch clan, Baruch, was someone who had dared to fight head on against a Nine Headed Serpent Emperor and win, killing it in the end.

A Nine Headed Serpent Emperor was an incredibly large creature, with strength to match. It could be considered one of the most powerful Saint-level magical beasts in existence. But Baruch still dared to fight it head on and killed it. From this, people learned how powerful and strong the Dragonblood Warriors were. Vincente glanced at Linley, then nodded. "Within my clan, we do indeed have secret methods for forging adamantine. But it will be hard for me to acquire all of the other rare ingredients right now."

“Let me handle that.” Monroe Dawson said.

Vincente nodded. Given the power and influence of the Dawson Conglomerate, procuring some ores should be very easy. Vincente looked at Linley. Solemnly, he said, “Linley, adamantine weapons are indeed very formidable. If you only use a small amount of adamantine ore in your weapon, I’ll still be able to sharpen and put an edge on it. But if you want to use this much adamantine, I’m afraid that at most, I’ll be able to make the edges of the sword slightly thinner. But I won’t be able to put an edge on it.”

A thousand-pound chunk of adamantine ore! Vincente had never even heard of such a thing.

The sturdiness of the weapon it was used to forge would be incredible. To put an edge on and sharpen such a weapon? Vincente knew his own limits.

“Unable to put an edge on it?”

Linley suddenly thought back to the records of his clan. The first Dragonblood Warrior had used a warblade to do battle, but the later Dragonblood Warriors did not. One had even used a massive warhammer, relying purely on weight and power.

A three thousand pound heavy sword would totally be a match for that warhammer of his ancestors.

“If you can’t put an edge on it, so be it.” Linley was very confident. Such a heavy sword with such weight would be able to smash magical beasts to death with sheer kinetic force when wielded by the terrifying strength of a Dragonblood Warrior.

“Good. As long as we have the other ores needed, I can immediately begin the forging for you. A single weapon won’t take more than half a day of work.” Vincente said confidently. He, Vincente, had forged countless weapons, and he was very confident in the secret forging methods of his clan.

Monroe Dawson laughed. “Vincente, then can you provide me with your secret recipe for forging adamantine now?”

“Fine. I’ll go get it now.” Vincente immediately left.

The Dawson Conglomerate’s efficiency level was terrifyingly high. Before nightfall, they had procured a large pile of quality ores. In truth, the secret forging methods of the Hyde clan didn’t require any specific ores, as every material had possible replacements as well.

But the materials provided by the Dawson Conglomerate were the best of the best.

That night.

"The quality of these materials is extremely high, and all of these ores are high value ores." Staring at the ores, Vincent was so excited that his face had a ruddy glow. Laughing loudly, he said, "Linley, with such good materials to work with, I'm afraid that the heavy sword will be slightly heavier than I anticipated."

"That's fine." Linley laughed.

A weapon weighing just a bit over three thousand pounds could still be easily wielded by most warriors of the ninth rank, much less the astonishingly strong Dragonblood Warriors.

"Alright. Tomorrow morning, I'll begin." Vincent said heroically.

That night, Linley didn't go back to his own manor. He chatted mentally with Bebe, who very obediently stayed home and didn't come over. As far as Bebe was concerned, right now his life consisted of eat, sleep, eat, sleep. This was the type of life he liked.

Early morning. The sky slowly brightened.

Those three Hyde clan members, father and two sons, were bare-chested as they began the forging process. Vincent was the primary worker, while Yotian and Trey assisted on the sides. The flames spat forth by the bellows were at an incredibly high temperature.

"Hiss, hiss."

Vincent Hyde's body began to emit a blue flame, which quickly merged with the flames in the furnace. The color of the flames in the furnace actually changed as well, and those other ores began to slowly liquefy. Only the adamantine ore didn't change at all.

Vincent picked up a cup of greenish herbal liquids and poured it directly over the adamantine ore. "Hiss, hiss." The green liquid actually began to transform the adamantine ore somehow, as it actually slowly began to melt as well.

Finally, the general shape of a sword could be seen.

"Clang!" "Clang!" "Clang!"

The forgehammer smashed down again and again, the speed of the blows coming at a terrifyingly fast rate. The hammer danced in Vincente's hands, giving everyone present the sense of watching an artistic performance. Clearly, Vincente's hammer strokes had a certain rhythm to it, and the form of the heavy sword began to become more and more clearly defined.

"Hiss, hiss."

Vincente's body was constantly emitting that blue flame, keeping the heavy sword under high temperatures at all times. He continued hammering away at it for three hours. The heavy sword, which originally had been all sorts of colors, gradually turned into a pitch black color. Vincente was covered in sweat, and his face was turning a bit white. This was perhaps the most tiring forging project he had ever done.

"Give me mountain spring water." Vincente shouted loudly.

His elder son, Yotian, immediately brought over a nearby barrel of water, then mixed into it a cup with a different, pre-prepared liquid inside. Using the secret liquid ingredients of their clan along with mountain spring water would definitely produce optimal tempering results.

"Hiss, hiss." The heavy sword was placed within the barrel.

Watching by the side, Linley and Monroe Dawson's eyes lit up. After being tempered, the heavy sword would more or less be complete. But just at this time, the gloomy, overcast sky suddenly boomed with thunder, catching everyone off-guard.

"Success!" Vincente pulled the heavy sword out, his face filled with excitement. He raised it high in the air, laughing loudly, "Haha, Linley, success! This is the finest creation I have ever made!"

"BOOOOOM!"

A terrifying sound could be heard as a bolt of blue lightning suddenly forked down, striking directly on top of the heavy sword!

## Chapter 17

This naturally generated bolt of lightning slashed down at high speed, and was many times faster than electrical bolts which thunder-element magi could produce.

Nobody present was able to react in time, and the lightning bolt crashed onto the upraised heavy sword.

“Ah!” Vincente let out a pain-filled scream as his body was suddenly enveloped in a wild blue flame, which even had some silvery white flame mixed within!

“Thud!” The heavy sword fell to the ground.

At the same time, Vincente collapsed as well, his entire body twitching, especially his right arm, which had been charred badly enough that the scent of burning flesh could be smelled. Even after collapsing, Vincente’s body continued to jerk about, and blood was pouring from his mouth.

“Father!” The two brothers Yotian and Trey let out simultaneous cries as they immediately ran forward.

“Mr. Vincente!” Both Linley and Monroe Dawson were shocked as well.

This natural bolt of lightning had carried an enormous amount of energy. It wasn’t unheard of for even powerful combatants to die due to being struck by lightning. All of them ran over, surrounding Vincente, as Monroe Dawson roared out, “Quick, have Mr. Armand [A’mān’dā] come, quick!”

Armand was a light-style magus under Monroe Dawson’s command who also specialized in medicine. He was extremely skilled at healing people.

“Yes!” Seeing this, the gate guard also was frantic, and he rushed to find the magus Armand.

Magus Armand arrived shortly afterwards. He was an old man with a snowy white beard. Without saying a word, he immediately invoked a light-style spell. The totally burnt and charred right arm of Vincente began to quickly and visibly heal. Soon, all traces of the injury were gone.

“I...I’m fine.” Vincente managed to force out these words with difficulty.

“How are your internals?” Armand asked immediately.

A powerful warrior was easily capable of sensing his body’s internal condition. This assessment would be more accurate than a magus’ external observations.

Vincente shook his head. “I’m fine. I just need a little time, and I will be alright.”

“Mr. Armand, there’s no further need for you to concern yourself with my father’s injuries.” Yotian said bluntly as well.

These words raised the suspicions of Monroe Dawson, Linley, Reynolds, George, and everyone else. They could all see that right now, Vincente was very weak. Vincente was a very powerful warrior; for him to be so weak now meant that he clearly had suffered an enormous injury.

But suddenly, Linley remember a passage from his clan's records regarding the Violetflame Warriors.

A Saint-level Violetflame Warrior possessed a power known as the Nirvana Rebirth. Generally speaking, they were able to recover from any wounds at an astonishing speed.

"This Master Vincente is only at the 'blue flame' level, and has just barely managed to enter the 'white flame' level. He is quite a distance away from the highest 'violet flame' level. Most likely, he doesn't have the Nirvana Rebirth ability yet, but he should still be able to heal his wounds." Linley understood.

The Four Supreme Warriors.

The Dragonblood Warriors could be considered as the warriors with the greatest combat potential, while the Violetflame Warriors were famous due to their Nirvana Rebirth ability. The Tigerstriped Warriors were known for their attacking speed, while the Undying Warriors were famed for their strength and endurance.

"Uncle Dawson, Master Vincente has secret techniques for recovering from his wounds. There's no need for him to take any medicine." Linley spoke.

Monroe Dawson nodded, then gave instructions to Armand. Armand spoke some well-intentioned words of guidance to Vincente, then left. As for Vincente, he lay down and rested for around ten minutes, after which he looked much better.

Linley couldn't help but feel astonished. The regenerative capabilities of the Violetflame Warriors really were something special.

"Linley, your heavy sword." Immediately after recovering a bit, Vincente began to worry about his masterpiece. "Quick, bring it over and let me take a look. I hope no damage was caused to the sword."

Only now did any of them pay attention to the discarded heavy sword. All of them were amazed! The formerly pitch-black sword now had a faint blue glow on its surface, as though a layer of frost had formed atop it.

"Let me see!" Vincente said urgently.



Linley grabbed the heavy sword and immediately gave it to Vincente. Of all the people present, only Vincente had any true knowledge regarding weapons.

Vincente still hadn't fully recovered from his injury, and so even lifting the sword up was hard for him. He was only able to grasp the hilt after allowing the tip of the sword to rest against the ground. Vincente's face was extremely solemn, and with his left hand, he began rap against the flat of the heavy sword's blade.

"Dang!" "Dang!" "Dang!"

A series of crisp, clear sound could be heard. Vincente began to apply more and more force to each blow, and the ringing sounds were growing louder as well. Vincente rapped every single part of the heavy sword, constantly changing positions.

While doing so, Vincente was staring intently at the sword while listening to the sounds.

Next to him, Linley, Monroe Dawson, and the others had stopped breathing. They knew that most likely, Vincente was assessing the heavy sword to see if the bolt of lightning had caused any damage to it or had altered it somehow. After all, the bolt of thunder had struck it just after it had been quenched in the liquid solution.

"Riiiiiing." With a single flick of Vincente's finger, the entire heavy sword emitted a beautiful sound. Hearing this almost perfect, rich, smooth sound, a look of wild joy appeared on Vincente's face.

"Heaven's will. Heaven's will."

His face filled with wild joy, Vincente turned to look at Linley. "Linley, it must be that heaven itself desired for you to possess this divine sword."

"Mr. Vincente, what's the situation with this heavy sword?" Monroe Dawson asked.

Vincente explained, "The hardest part of forging an adamantine weapon is bringing out the full potential of the adamantine, since the alloyed metals are all significantly inferior to adamantine. Although the secret method of my clan allows me to alloy a high percentage of the other metals with the adamantine, I of course am not able to alloy it 100% perfectly."

"In other words, the internals of the sword that I had just forged were not perfectly consistent, and there were minute inconsistencies in each spot."

A look of disbelieving joy was on Vincente's face. "But I didn't expect that right after I finished quenching the sword, I would get struck by that bolt of lightning, which

caused all of the remaining internal irregularities in the sword to be fused perfectly. The full potential of the adamantine has been released. I simply can't believe that something like this happened. This is heaven's will. Heaven's will!"

Linley was overjoyed as well.

"Third Bro, congratulations." Yale, Reynolds, and George all began to grin. They all understood. After having withstood this lightning strike, the quality of Linley's heavy sword had just improved by another level.

"And not just that. Look. There's a faint blue glow on the surface of this heavy sword. I've touched the surface of it, and it is unbelievably slick and smooth. Most likely in the future, when you kill someone using it, no blood will stick to it." Vincente chortled.

"Killing without being stained by blood." Monroe Dawson sighed in praise as well.

The creation of this heavy sword was indeed miraculous, causing everyone present to sigh in amazement.

"This heavy sword was originally pitch black, but now it has a layer of blue light on it. At first glance, one would say that it was dark blue." Yale sighed in amazement.

This sword really did have quite the majestic aura to it.

"Yotian, Trey, bring me the measuring sticks." Vincente instructed. After finishing the smithing of a sword, naturally he would have to see what the sword's exact dimensions were. Linley could feel that this sword was very heavy, but he couldn't say exactly what its weight was.

Monroe Dawson only chortled happily as he watched them take the measurements for this sword.

"The sword is 1.41 meters long. It weighs..." Yale and the others quickly began to weigh the sword, but when they saw the figures, they were all astonished.

"3600 pounds! The heavy sword is 1.41 meters long, and 3600 pounds heavy!" Reynolds began screaming in a high-pitched voice. This was an extremely domineering heavy sword! And as far as it was length-wise, it was just about right for Linley.

What's more, Linley wasn't finished growing yet, and his strength would continue to increase as well. Naturally, this sword would only grow more and more easy to use in the future.

"Third Bro. What is the name of this heavy sword? Quick, pick a name." Yale was the first to say.

Vincente and the others all looked at Linley.

Reynolds interjected, "This was hit by a lightning bolt. I say, how about calling it Heavenly Thunder? That's really cool, right?"

"That's way too vulgar." George shook his head.

"How about Lightning's Majesty?" Reynolds continued.

Yale and everyone else began to laugh. Monroe Dawson teased, "Reynolds, why call it Lightning's Majesty? Let's just go ahead and call the sword Reynolds."

[Translator's note – There is a pun here. In Chinese, Reynolds name is Lei Nuo, with Lei meaning thunder. Heavenly Lightning is "Tian Lei", while Lightning's Majesty is "Lei Wei". Everyone is teasing Reynolds for picking names that sound similar to his own.]

Reynolds pouted and fell silent after letting out a 'hmp'. "It doesn't necessarily have to be related to lightning." Linley laughed. "Since there's no way for this sword to be sharpened, then let's just call it Bladeless." Linley casually picked this name. It was a very simple one, but Linley liked it.

"Bladeless? The heavy sword, Bladeless? Not bad." Yale nodded.

"Bladeless."

Vincente, Yotian, Trey, and the others all savored the name for a while, then nodded.

That day, Monroe Dawson gifted Linley with a fine sheath for a heavy sword. It was a deep blue color and forged from precious metals. It was only half a meter long, but had openings on both ends. Linley could sheath his heavy sword into it from either direction, with half of it remaining visible.

This was how sheaths for heavy swords were usually designed. Scabbards that were meant to cover the entire sword were simply too long, and once the warrior removed the sword from the sheath, the meter-long sheath would be very impractical and get in the way. This half-meter long scabbard was very light and wouldn't cause any hindrance.

That night at a banquet.

Linley dressed in his warrior clothes and carried this heavy sword with him. Thanks to his long-term training, his 1.9 meter tall body was rippling with muscles, and his warriors clothes put his charisma on full display. With this heavy sword on his back, he did indeed have the aura of a powerful heavy swordsman.

“Haha, Linley.” Monroe Dawson laughed as he looked at Linley. “In my opinion, nobody who sees you would believe that you were a genius magus.”

Linley was slightly startled, but then he laughed as well.

Dressed like this, naturally it would be hard for others to tell that he was a magus.

“I remember when we first arrived at the Ernst Institute, when we were in our first year, Third Bro was only nine. Even then, he was able to easily lift up and throw that nine year old who won the tournament quite a distance. Ever since then, I knew that Third Bro was extremely talented as a warrior as well.” Yale chortled.

Everyone was enjoying this banquet immensely, and after having acquired this heavy sword, Linley felt very pleased as well.

“When I have some time, I’ll definitely have to analyze and train in using heavy swords.” Linley made his decision. When he had originally acquired the Bloodviolet Godsword, Linley had also spent several months before totally comprehending all the best ways to use a flexible sword such as Bloodviolet.

But Linley had the feeling that, comparatively speaking, training with Bloodviolet wasn’t that hard, only fast and strange.

But this heavy sword weighed 3600 pounds.

On the surface, it would seem that the techniques for using a heavy sword were simple. Block, smash, etc. But Linley knew that was just the most basic of movements. Using this sword to its full potential definitely wouldn’t be that easy. He knew this because his clan’s records had described the ways in which that ancestor of his had used a massive warhammer. Clearly, there were deep mysteries with regards to how one used weapons.

To bring out a heavy weapon’s full power and potential?

This was very hard.

But upon succeeding, it would possess tremendous power.

The banquet ended.

Linley began to engage in some simple sword stances in an empty courtyard within the Dawson Conglomerate's estate, trying to feel for the heavy sword's balance, and how it felt when thrusting and chopping. Just as Linley was beginning to totally immerse himself in getting a basic feel for the technique behind using such a sword...

"Boss, boss! Come back, quick! That Clayde has finally appeared!" Bebe's excited voice suddenly rang out in Linley's mind.

Linley instantly came to his normal senses.

"Clayde is back." Linley felt his previously calm heart suddenly fill with excitement, and his body suddenly began to brim with power. He didn't have time to explain too much to his bros. He bid a simple farewell, and then headed for his own residence at high speed.

## Chapter 18

Bearing the adamantine heavy sword on his back, Linley quickly made his way through the streets. However, just from appearances, nobody could tell how heavy it truly was, and so Linley didn't attract any notice from bystanders.

"Clayde finally came. I've waited so long!" Linley suppressed the excitement he felt. "Calm. This time, no matter what, I can't make any mistakes again."

The first time, he had thought he had a better than 90% chance of success, but unexpectedly, that Saint-level Fateguard had appeared out of nowhere and caused Linley's plan to fail. This time, Linley didn't want to make any mistakes.

"Linley." Doehring Cowart's slightly hoarse voice rang out. "Remember, you previously were together for a period of time with Shaq and his men. Upon Clayde's return, Shaq might report that fact to him."

"Understood."

Linley had thought of this possibility long ago. But for the sake of being able to find the place where Clayde would end up, he had to travel alongside Shaq, which resulted in them arriving together in Hess City. He definitely could not kill Shaq, because once Shaq and his group of men died, then Clayde perhaps wouldn't show himself at all.

"I had to act in this way. But even if Clayde knew that I had travelled along with Shaq for a time, there's nothing he can do, because...I already know his whereabouts. There's no way he can escape." Linley was totally confident. At the same time, Bebe, who was spiritually connected to him, was watching over Clayde and his men.

As they chatted, Linley arrived at Keyan Road.

In order to prevent himself from being seen by Clayde's men, Linley immediately headed towards his residence via a series of back alleys.

A black blur suddenly travelled several dozen meters and leapt into Linley's arms.

"Bebe." Laughing, Linley looked at the little Shadowmouse in his arms.

Bebe's eyes were gleaming as he delightedly conversed mentally, "Boss, I saw Clayde come here not too long ago. But I only caught a glimpse of half his face before he entered the manor. Boss, those two people you employed were too useless. They didn't notice him at all."

"Hrm?"

Linley was somewhat suspicious. He had ordered those two to stay on the lookout. Logically speaking, as soon as Clayde had appeared, they should have noticed him.

"Milord, milord!"

Ah Da and Ah Er ran over and said respectfully, "Milord, we just saw a large group of people enter that manor not too long ago."

"A large group of people?" Linley immediately asked. "Was one of them missing a hand?"

Ah Er shook his head. "No, milord. Milord, you ordered us to pay attention to any groups of people entering the manor, and you also told us to watch for a man with a missing hand. But we didn't see anyone with a missing hand in that group."

"Impossible." Linley said with certainty. "There definitely was a man with a missing hand."

Bebe had already seen half of Clayde's face, and given Bebe's eyesight, he definitely wouldn't have been mistaken. Since Bebe was certain he had seen him, then Clayde was definitely in that group.

“Definitely?” Hearing how certain Linley was, the man felt awkward. “Milord, perhaps...perhaps there were too many people in the group, so my elder brother and I didn’t see him.”

Linley frowned.

Too many people?

Originally, when he fought with Clayde’s squad at the palace, Linley and Bebe had killed quite a number, leaving only ten or so knights remaining. And given the number of magical beasts on the road here, it would be quite exceptional if all ten of Clayde’s men were still alive. How could this be considered ‘too many people’?

“Many people? How many?” Linley asked.

“Very many. At least seventy or eighty.” The man said haltingly, seemingly uncertain. “Regardless, there were very many. That group suddenly appeared and then entered the manor. We two brothers couldn’t clearly see every single person in the group. Perhaps there really was a man with a missing hand amongst them.”

Linley was confused.

Seventy or eighty people?

Even when he had attempted to kill Clayde in the palace, Clayde’s Wildthunder squad had only thirty or so people. What’s more, after having been reduced in numbers by himself and Bebe, how could so many more people have appeared out of nowhere?

Linley didn’t understand it.

“Boss, there really were a lot of people.” Bebe’s voice also sounded out now, in Linley’s mind. “By the time I noticed Clayde, he was just about to enter the manor. I only had the chance to catch a glimpse of half his face. But behind him there were at least fifty or so people. But as to how many people entered the manor before Clayde, I’m not too sure.”

Linley definitely trusted Bebe, of course.

“That many people?” Linley wondered to himself.

“Alright, you can go now. This is a reward for you and your brother. Keep watching for me.” Linley tossed the half-filled sack of gold, which had fifty coins in it.

Accepting the sack, he took a peek inside through the opening. The insides were filled with gleaming gold. This half-bag had to have near fifty coins in it! His heart began to be filled with excitement. When he had escaped here to Hess City, he hadn't even been able to feed himself. Now, after only having worked for Linley for a few days, the man tossed him a sack with fifty gold coins? How could he not be wildly excited?

"Thank you, milord. Thank you, milord." He made up his mind. He and his elder brother would consider keeping a close watch on the people inside the manor. He immediately departed, then ran to the top floor of the nearby restaurant where he and his elder brother kept watch.

Within the courtyard.

All alone, Linley was pondering what he should do next.

A white light shone out from the Coiling Dragon ring, transforming into the white-robed, white-haired, white-bearded Doehring Cowart. Doehring Cowart stroked his beard. Chuckling, he said, "Linley, what's wrong? Are you in a bad mood?"

Linley lifted his head up to look at Doehring Cowart. Upon seeing his Grandpa Doehring, Linley felt his heart calm down a little. With such an experienced elder by his side, at least Linley wouldn't grow frantic or feel unsure of himself.

"Grandpa Doehring. I'm wondering where that group of people with Clayde came from." Linley said.

Doehring Cowart chuckled. "You are wasting your time wondering about this. Why don't you act instead? Hide in a corner of a wall in their manor and take a look for yourself. By then, you will know exactly who these people with Clayde are."

Linley began to laugh.

Right. Why was he wasting time?

"Carrying this heavy sword will still impact my speed." Linley removed his adamantine heavy sword, then entered his bedroom and placed it under his bed, then grabbed his bedsheets.

Standing on Linley's shoulders, Bebe stared curiously at the adamantine heavy sword. He mentally asked Linley, "Boss, is this heavy sword the treasure which you had created for you using that adamantine ore?"

Linley laughed and nodded.



"How heavy is this heavy sword?" Bebe asked curiously.

"3600 pounds." Linley replied honestly.

Bebe rubbed his little nose with his paws in surprise, while his beady little eyes spun around in shock as well as he stared at the adamantine heavy sword.

"Enough. You'll have plenty of time to look at it later." Linley put down the bedsheets, hiding the heavy sword.

"Ah. Hey boss, I suddenly remember something. That Clayde probably already knows that you are right here." Bebe looked at the interspatial ring on Linley's finger and cried out in alarm.

"What? Why?" Linley was extremely shocked. "Boss, you personalized and bound your Bloodviolet Godsword using a drop of blood. I remember you saying that when you were imprisoned within the Radiant Temple, although Bloodviolet was confiscated, you could still sense where it was. Interspatial rings are also personalized through blood. Wouldn't Clayde then be able to sense the location of his interspatial ring?" Bebe urgently transmitted his thoughts to Linley.

But hearing this, Linley only began to laugh.

"Haha." Standing next to them, Doehring Cowart began to laugh as well. Only, Bebe wasn't able to hear Doehring Cowart's laughter.

Immediately upon leaving the city of Fenlai, Linley had already questioned Doehring Cowart regarding this interspatial ring he had taken.

"Bebe." Linley laughed as he explained. "This interspatial ring is different from a divine artifact such as Bloodviolet. Technically speaking, an interspatial ring isn't a divine artifact, just a very valuable magical item. Its basic underpinnings are quite similar to the magiccrystal cards, which use fingerprints to personalize and recognize an owner, while interspatial rings use blood to do the same. Only the owner of an interspatial ring can open it and take out its contents. However, when a magical item is taken away, there's no way for the owner of it to sense the exact location of his item. Do you think divine artifacts are that common? Even my adamantine heavy sword, Bladeless, isn't at the level of divine artifacts."

Divine artifacts.

It was impossible for a divine artifact to be forged within this material plane, in the Yulan continent. Things such as the Coiling Dragon ring and the Bloodviolet sword were both very ancient items.

"The Coiling Dragon ring had suddenly emitted a terrifying burst of energy back at the Radiant Temple and saved me. What's more, when using magic through it, it reduces the amount of mageforce and spiritual energy needed to a sixth of normal. Bloodviolet, in turn, can become flexible or straight as the wielder chooses, and is virtually indestructible."

Linley had a certain theory.

It was already a fact that the Coiling Dragon ring had secrets hidden within that he hadn't yet discovered. That terrifying burst of energy at the Radiant Temple was proof.

As for Bloodviolet?

For it to be used as a focusing seal for that mysterious magical formation meant that it definitely had special qualities to it as well. Only, right now Linley was still too weak and couldn't discover what was so special about it.

"Bloodviolet." Linley glanced at the sword at his waist which he was wearing like a belt. What was the real ability of this mysterious Bloodviolet flexible sword?

"Bebe, you stay here for now." Linley instructed.

"Got it." Bebe obediently remained within the courtyard, while Linley stealthily slipped out of his residence and headed quietly towards Clayde and Shaq's manor.

Linley pressed himself against one of the walls of the manor which Shaq had purchased.

"Snick."

Linley's sharp claws emerged. He easily cut a small opening into the wall, then transformed his hands back to normal as he peered inside through the opening.

That night Linley had stayed at the residence with Shaq, he had memorized the entire layout, including the manmade hill and which rooms were which. Linley had chosen to make his cut in a very particular location; through this cut, he was able to see into both the front courtyard and the back courtyard, without anything obstructing his vision.

"My royal father."

Linley's sensitive ears actually managed to pick up the conversation between Shaq and Clayde in the back courtyard. Linley carefully peered in that direction. Indeed, Clayde and Shaq were walking shoulder by shoulder within Linley's area of vision.

"It's Clayde." Linley watched carefully.

But what he saw utterly stunned him. "Clayde's hand...his hand..."

Right now, both of Clayde's hands were in perfect condition. But Linley had clearly seen Clayde's hand fall off after being cut. He had even stolen the interspatial ring from the hand. There definitely was no mistake.

"To regenerate a lost hand would require the services of a light-style Arch Magus of the ninth rank at least." Linley was astonished.

When Clayde left, he didn't have a single magus with him. How did he get mixed up with an Arch Magus of the ninth rank?

"Royal father, how did you end up encountering forces belonging to the Radiant Church? Those people are all so formidable." Shaq said in a somewhat astonished voice.

Clayde nodded. "Of course they are. These people are amongst the most terrifying people the Radiant Church leads. The Ascetics led by Lord Fallen Leaf have many combatants of the ninth rank amongst them. Travelling by their side, we were quite safe the entire time."

Clayde was speaking in a normal tone. Logically speaking, someone from the opposite side of a distant wall shouldn't be able to hear him. But Linley, as a Dragonblood Warrior, possessed freakishly enhanced hearing, and heard every word clearly.

"A group of Ascetics? Led by Lord Fallen Leaf?" The look on Linley's face changed.

Lord Fallen Leaf was a peak-stage Saint-level combatant. And he had with him a group of freakishly strong Ascetics, quite a few of whom had reached the ninth rank.

## Chapter 19

Linley quietly left, returning to his own manor.

On the road back from Clayde's residence to his own, Linley's face was a mask of unhappiness. This news he had just received had made Linley think that things would be much more difficult now.

"Linley. What decision have you come to?" Doehring Cowart appeared from within the Coiling Dragon ring.

There was still a degree of distance between Linley's residence and Clayde's manor. Doehring Cowart, this five-thousand year old ghost of a peak-stage Saint level combatant, wasn't afraid that Lord Fallen Leaf would see him here.

"Me?"

Linley balled his fists. "Endure. I can only endure and wait."

Doehring Cowart nodded with satisfaction. He had watched every step of Linley's journey and growth. Doehring Cowart felt affection and love for Linley as he might a grandson.

He didn't wish for Linley to act too rashly.

"Linley. Don't worry." Stroking his beard, Doehring Cowart spoke confidently. "That Fallen Leaf probably just let Clayde travel along with him since it didn't inconvenience him. He definitely won't stay with Clayde for too long. In the past, when Clayde was still the king of a kingdom, his status was already much lower than that of Fallen Leaf. As for the current Clayde...the Kingdom of Fenlai itself has been destroyed, making him even less important. What's more, based on my calculations, the new Holy Capital which the Radiant Church will select most likely will not be Hess City. Thus, Fallen Leaf won't stay here too long."

Linley nodded.

The previous Holy Capital, 'Fenlai City', had been totally annihilated by the army of magical beasts from the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts. Only rubble was left. The Radiant Church definitely would not permit such an event to happen again. Naturally, they wouldn't erect the new Holy Capital in a location like Hess City, which was so near their new borders.

After all, the 'King' of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts, Dylin, had previously said that the magical beasts under his domain could possibly expand to the point of taking up half of the Holy Union. Right now, they had only taken up a third of the Holy Union's territory. If they were to truly take over half, then Hess City would fall into that area as well.

Heidens and the other top level members of the Radiant Church simply did not have confidence in their ability to resist this Deity-level Dylin.

Although the Radiant Church still had untapped powers of its own that it hadn't put on display yet, once they deployed those powers against Dylin, it would be equivalent to them expending all of the resources they had saved up over ten millennia in one battle.

Heidens didn't dare to act in such a way.

"Just wait." Linley took a deep breath, forcing himself to remain calm. He already knew where Clayde was. So long as he didn't make any mistakes, Clayde definitely wouldn't be able to escape.

Within a restaurant opposite of Shaq's manor, the same restaurant where Linley's two servants maintained their vigil over Shaq and Clayde.

That very day.

Wearing a very ordinary sleeveless sweatshirt, Linley's powerful chest muscles were plainly visible. Those two mighty, muscled arms and that heavy sword on his back gave the impression of an extremely strong man.

A heavy sword warrior!

Linley's current appearance was a very commonly seen one. Warriors prioritized muscular training the most, and thus many of them had powerful bodies, and quite a few used heavy swords as well.

"Two plates of roast meat and two bottles of Bullfighters." Linley said in a deep voice.

"Sir, please take a seat first." Seeing how powerful Linley appeared, the waiter was extremely respectful to him. Linley selected a seat located towards the interior of the restaurant which still offered a clear vantage point to see through the door and the windows towards Clayde's manor.

The waiter immediately pulled the chair out for Linley to sit on.

"Sir, please wait a moment." The waiter said with a smile. At this time, another waiter came over with those two bottles of Bullfighters. Bullfighter was a type of extremely strong liquor, particularly favored by powerful warriors.

Casting a sneak glance at the heavy sword on Linley's back, the attendant was secretly shocked. "Oh my lord. What a long, thick heavy sword, and from the coloration, it must have been made from special materials. It must weigh at least a few hundred pounds. This gentleman must be an extremely strong warrior."

At this restaurant, when the servers were bored, they would sneak peeks at their various customers. After having done so for a long time, their eyes had become quite sharp and their guesses accurate. Seeing how easily Linley was carrying this heavy sword about, they could immediately tell that Linley was an extremely powerful warrior.

The elder of the two brothers whom Linley had stationed in this restaurant walked over at this time.

"Take this roasted meat back and give it to Bebe." Linley didn't give him a chance to speak before issuing orders. "Yes, milord."

The elder of the two brothers didn't have anything important to do either. He immediately carried out Linley's instructions and took the roast meat back.

And then, Linley just quietly sat in the restaurant and drank his liquor.

Linley drank wine very slowly. A single bottle of liquor was enough to last him two or three hours. He just continued to drink while keeping an eye on Clayde's manor.

That night.

In the higher levels of the restaurant, a travelling bard was belting out songs, and the entire bar was extremely rowdy. Quite a few warriors were shouting and laughing at each other.

Because of the catastrophe, Hess City was more lively than it had ever been.

Many powerful warriors patronized this restaurant, and all of them were very energetic. They actually began to compete in arm wrestling.

"Ten thousand gold coins! The winner gets ten thousand gold coins!" The contest organizer shouted in a high pitched voice.

To many of the powerful warriors who had fled here after the disaster, although ten thousand gold coins wasn't a small sum of money, it wasn't a particularly large sum either.

"I'll join. These ten thousand gold coins are mine." A 2.2 meter tall brown-haired warrior with a barrel-sized chest sat down. His arms were definitely thicker than most people's legs.

"Hrmph, I'll give you a go."

A red-haired man with a body similar to Linley's walked over and sat down as well. The two immediately stretched their arms out and clasped hands. Immediately afterwards, the muscles in their arms began to bulge.

Those warriors drinking next to them all began to shout out loudly in encouragement.

"This sort of life isn't that bad." Linley knew that waiting for Fallen Leaf to leave would be an extremely boring event. Who knew how long Fallen Leaf would stay? One day? Two days? Ten?

Linley turned to watch with interest as well.

"Neither of these two are weak. They are at least warriors of the sixth rank." Linley nodded to himself. Right now, experts could be seen everywhere in Hess City.

Their arms locked against each other, these two warriors were exerting ten thousand pounds of force against each other.

"Grrr!" That brown-haired warrior whose arms were thicker than most people's legs suddenly let out a mighty shout, and all of the veins on his arm began to pop out, criss-crossing his arm like worms beneath the skin. Anyone looking at him would think that his veins were about to explode at any moment.

The red-haired man's face had turned red as well, as he wasn't willing to back down in the slightest.

"Creak. Creak." The table underneath their arms was beginning to shiver as well.

The tables and chairs in this restaurant were all made from steel, and were extremely sturdy. Generally speaking, powerful warriors were able to carefully calibrate and control the amount of power released from their wrists as they engaged in arm-wrestling above the table. For the table to begin quivering due to their strength was a sign that both men were at their limits.

"Haha, let's go Harold [Ha'luo'de]!"

"Damnit, Harold, try harder!"

“Second Bro, don’t lose in front of me!”

All the warriors who were drinking around them were howling loudly in support. Slowly, that large man with massive arms named Harold gained a slight advantage, causing the red-haired warrior to immediately try desperately to resist.

“Haaaaah!”

With a loud roar, Harold smashed his opponent’s arm against the table, causing a impression to be left upon the steel table.

“Haha, I win!” Harold laughed loudly.

“Fuck. Second Bro, beat it. Let me come. This big dumb idiot wants to win ten thousand gold? Hmph.” A one-eyed red-haired warrior walked over.

The restaurant was very rowdy, and those energetic warriors screamed and shouted, while up above, the travelling bard was also singing loudly so as to get that bit of gold the restaurant had promised him.

Noisy.

But in this rowdy environment, three or four people remained silent. The warriors around them quite conscientiously didn’t disturb those people. All of these warriors had significant outside experience, and they had good judgment. They knew who they could afford to offend, and who they could not.

The next morning, soon after Linley sat down.

“Hrm?”

Linley suddenly saw a familiar face. Lord Fallen Leaf.

As skinny as a beggar, Lord Fallen Leaf casually walked out of Clayde’s manor and departed, with two barefooted Ascetics dressed in sackcloth by his side.

“He left? But only Fallen Leaf and two Ascetics have left.” Linley considered for a moment. He knew that many Ascetics had come on this journey, and many experts were amongst their ranks. Right now, only three had left.

“Continue to wait.” Linley took a sip of liquor. He would keep waiting.

Clayde, Shaq, and the others sent off Lord Fallen Leaf, watching him leave from the gate.



"Royal father, there is something that I forgot to tell you." Shaq slapped himself on the head. "Royal father, Lord Linley travelled with us for a time, but two days ago he left. He was heading north."

"Linley."

Hearing this name, Clayde almost shouted aloud in surprise.

This Linley had nearly taken his life on two separate occasions.

"What's wrong, royal father?" Shaq questioned. As far as Shaq could tell, this wasn't a major issue. After all, the Kingdom of Fenlai had already been annihilated. Their royal clan was royal only in name now, and not in truth. It would be surprising if Linley had actually continued to be loyal to them.

"He travelled with you. Did he know that you are living here?" Clayde immediately asked.

"Yes. He even stayed here a night." Shaq said, confused.

Clayde's heart began to shudder. "This Linley is definitely still in Hess City." Clayde knew that Linley wanted to kill him, and wouldn't leave just like that.

"No worries. There's still a large group of Ascetics living here." Clayde comforted himself.

"But when the Ascetics leave, I will leave with them." Clayde made his decision. Only by travelling together with the Ascetics would he feel safe.

Clayde carefully looked in every direction.

He even had this strange feeling that Linley was looking at him from somewhere nearby.

A day passed. A second day passed. Aside from going back at night to sleep, Linley spent all his time at the restaurant. Once, a foolish person tried to cause Linley some trouble, but Linley booted him from the back of the restaurant to the front of the restaurant with one kick. Thereafter, no one else disturbed Linley.

In the blink of an eye, six days passed.

During these past six days, aside from Fallen Leaf and those two Ascetics, none of the other Ascetics had left.

Within Clayde's manor.

"Everyone, why are you in such a rush to leave?" Clayde looked at the three representatives of the Ascetics in front of him, trying to persuade them.

An old, golden-haired man said calmly, "Clayde, we must head towards the new Holy Capital now. Sorry for inconveniencing you these past days. We'll leave now."

These three Ascetics totally ignored Clayde's entreaties as they prepared to leave immediately.

"Milords, you are heading to the new Holy Capital? I wish to go as well. How about I travel alongside you?" Clayde said immediately, while at the same time, he instructed his son Shaq, "Shaq, prepare some things. We leave immediately."

At this point in time, Clayde didn't feel any sense of security at all.

If only Kaiser was left with him, Clayde didn't feel confident that Kaiser would be able to protect him against both Linley and that freakish magical beast of his.

"Travel along with us?" The golden-haired old man frowned.

In truth, they were not making a trip towards the new Holy Capital at all. They had a secret mission.

"Impossible. We are under strict orders from the Church." The golden-haired man said coldly.

The other two looked coldly at Clayde as well. "If you follow us secretly, you should know what the end result will be." After they spoke, the three turned and left, leaving behind a pole-axed Clayde.

Clayde hadn't expected that these Ascetics would forbid him from travelling with them.

"Milords!" Clayde chased out from the main hall, but the fifty or so Ascetics had already left the manor via the gate. Not a single one of them turned to look back at him.

Clayde considered what to do. He didn't dare to follow them. Although the Radiant Church taught that men should be benevolent, when they decided to act against someone, they were definitely without mercy. Right now, Clayde was no longer of particular use to the Radiant Church. Those Ascetics definitely would not fear to kill him.

"Royal father." Shaq walked over, looking at Clayde.

Clayde frowned. He was quiet for a moment. Then, he gave his orders. "Let's leave from the back gate. We will leave immediately. Yes, immediately. The danger grows with each passing minute."

## Chapter 20

Within the restaurant.

Seeing a large group of Ascetics leave Clayde's manor, Linley was wildly exultant. At a glance, Linley could tell that over fifty people were in that group of Ascetics. For such a large group of them to leave most likely meant that all of them had left.

"It's been six or seven days. By now, it's almost certain that Shaq has told Clayde about our meeting. Most likely, Clayde has already been able to guess that I'm nearby."

Linley casually tossed down a few gold coins. Suddenly, gusts of air began to wrap around him, and moving like the breeze, Linley agilely flew out of the restaurant.

Despite bearing the heavy sword on his back, with the assistance of wind-style magic, he still moved with great ease. But of course, this was due to Linley having become a magus of the seventh rank. If a magus of the third rank had been the one to cast the spell, the effect wouldn't have been nearly as good. "Bebe, watch the back door." Linley mentally instructed Bebe.

"Boss, got it."

As Linley rushed towards one of the exterior walls of Clayde's manor, he began to mumble the words to another spell – Windscout.

"Whoosh!"

With Linley at the center, a gust of air suddenly spread out in all directions. Closing his eyes, Linley could clearly sense everything the Windscout had detected.

"Hrm? Gathering near the back gate?"

The Windscout spell could only detect bodies and objects. It couldn't actually make out faces clearly. However, through the usage of the Windscout, Linley had already been able to discover that the people inside the manor were all hurriedly moving towards the back courtyard. Clearly, they were all getting ready to flee.

"Hmph. As predicted." With a quiet movement, Linley flowed into Clayde's manor, moving into the front courtyard with movements as light as the wind. Quietly but quickly, Linley made his way on the inside paths towards the back courtyard.

"Hurry, hurry!" Clayde berated angrily.

"Let's go from the back gate. We are heading out immediately. We are leaving Hess City." Clayde said directly.

The royal consort was confused. "Your Majesty, aren't we all living here just fine? Why?"

"Whap!"

Clayde slapped her across the face.

"Enough crap." Clayde snarled.

"Hurry up. Forget about the horses. You two, you are responsible for the Princess and the Royal Consort." Clayde ordered two of his knights, and then had a third one open the back gate.

Linley, hiding behind a manmade hill, watched this all while laughing coldly.

"As I thought. Not a single Ascetic is left." With a leap, Linley retreated at high speed, moving to a place where Clayde and Kaiser wouldn't be able to see him, then he leapt past the wall. And then, Linley turned and moved at high speed to the back gate. But just as Linley had rounded the corner, he came to a sudden halt.

Bebe was right next to the back gate.

"Creaaaaak." The back gate began to open.

Bebe immediately scurried over at high speed to a patch of wild grass nearby. Given that Bebe was only fist-sized, the wild grass was totally capable of covering and hiding Bebe's entire body.

"Bebe. When Clayde comes out, tell me right away." Linley hid behind the corner, and his entire body began to be covered with black scales. "Snick." His forehead, back, elbows, and kneecaps all began to sprout sharp spikes.

And that long, iron-whip-like draconic tail sprouted out as well.

Linley's black eyes suddenly transformed into a dark gold color, the same color as the eyes of the Armored Razorback Wyrms.

Total Dragonform! “Wind-style supporting magic – Supersonic.” At the same time, Linley reinforced himself with a wind spell. After having completely Dragonformed, Linley felt that his body was full of limitless power.

Right now, that 3600 pound adamantite heavy sword didn’t have any impact on Linley at all.

To a mighty warrior who could easily lift up something weighing hundreds of thousands of pounds, what was a mere 3600? Comparatively speaking, it was like asking an ordinary man who could lift 100 pounds to carry a one pound item on him. Would it impact him?

Clayde continued to urge his men, and one Wildthunder knight after another began to step out of the back gate.

Clayde himself walked through the gate, with Shaq by his side. And then the princess and the royal consort, under the protection of the Wildthunder knights, headed out as well. As for Kaiser, he was at the very end, serving as their guard and escort.

“Boss, Clayde came out.”

Just after Clayde stepped out of the manor, Bebe’s voice rang out in Linley’s mind. The eyes of Linley, who had been hiding behind the corner this entire time, suddenly began to shine.

“Whoosh!”

A mighty leap forward, combined with the wind around him propelling him forward at high speed.

“Swish!”

In the blink of an eye, a black, human-sized blur slashed through a distance of seventy meters, charging directly at the back gate to Clayde’s manor. Somewhat caught off guard, Clayde turned to look, and when he did, he saw that this human-shaped blur was already next to him. That familiar figure made Clayde’s heart quail. Before he even had a chance to call out or to react, a powerful force suddenly bound him.

“Don’t move. Otherwise. You die.” Linley’s voice was transmitted directly to Clayde’s ear.

"Ah!" The royal consort had just stepped out of the gate. Upon seeing Linley, she was so frightened that she immediately screamed. But then, with a 'snick' sound, the consort's head went flying off.

Linley retracted his claws.

The severed head of the consort oozed blood everywhere, while her body collapsed to the floor.

"Mon...monster!" The princess, terrified, retreated backwards.

"Release his Majesty!" The Wildthunder knights who had left along with Shaq immediately charged over, but as they did, a black blur flashed towards them. The little Shadowmouse, Bebe, who had suddenly transformed to half a meter in length, landed on the ground. As he did, those two warriors who had wanted to charge over collapsed, as half of their necks had been severed.

"None of you resist. Resistance is futile." Linley's cold voice rang out.

At this time, Kaiser charged over as well.

"Lord Kaiser, what...what is that monster?" The princess was terrified. But Shaq, whom Clayde had explained everything to, knew that this monster was actually Linley.

The aberration in front of them was covered from head to toe in black scales, and there were spikes sprouting from his forehead, knees, elbows, and back. Its scale covered feet and claws were all extremely sharp.

And what's more, it had an iron-whip-like draconic tail.

Right now, that draconic tail was wrapping tightly around Clayde, preventing him from moving at all. With each small swaying motion of Linley's draconic tail, Clayde's body swayed as well.

This scene stunned everyone present.

"Kaiser. This time, you don't have any chance." Linley's cold voice rang out.

A pained look was on Kaiser's face. He knew that even if he fought one on one against Linley, victory was no sure thing. What's more, Linley had that freakish magical beast companion who was on the same level of power as him.

Kaiser wasn't confident in his ability to deal with either Linley or the magical beast, Bebe.

And now that Clayde had been caught by Linley, he, Kaiser, did indeed have no chance at all.

“Lin...Linley! Release my royal father!” Shaq shouted angrily.

Linley glanced at Shaq with his cold, dark golden eyes. Shaq shivered, no longer daring to speak. Right now, Linley’s appearance had stupefied everyone present. Those Wildthunder knights who had followed Clayde had also battled against and been slaughtered by Linley and Bebe in the past. They knew exactly how powerful Linley and his freakish magical beast companion Bebe were.

“Linley.” Just as Clayde was going to beg for mercy...

“Crunch!” “Crack!”

Linley actually tore off Clayde’s ring finger and index finger, then casually tossed them in the direction of the princess and Kaiser’s group.

“Ah...ah!” Clayde couldn’t refrain from howling from the agony of having his fingers ripped off.

“Clayde, I’ll tell you right now that you are definitely going to die.” Linley said casually.

Clayde turned his fierce, tiger-like glare towards Linley.

But what welcomed his gaze was Linley’s cold, emotionless pair of dark gold eyes.

“Right now, you have two choices. The first is to be tortured to death. The second is to tell me who you gave my mother to, and who killed her. And then, I’ll let you die an easy death.” Linley said calmly.

Linley knew very well that the best way to deal with someone like Clayde was to lay it out clearly for him.

Otherwise, Clayde would think that there was still some hope of living. He would grit his teeth and refuse to answer, for the sake of that hope.

“No! If you are willing to spare me, AH!!” Linley once again remorselessly ripped out another one of Clayde’s fingers. Calmly, Linley said, “You are definitely going to die. The only question is, will you tell the truth early and spare yourself some pain and suffering?”

“Your Majesty!”

Kaiser was about to immediately rush over.

"Kaiser, do you want everyone present to die?" Linley's dark gold eyes stared at Kaiser. Kaiser instantly halted. He understood that Linley and Bebe definitely had the power to kill everyone present.

Even he, Kaiser, would only have the ability to flee. Facing a combined attack from both Linley and Bebe, he didn't have any chance of victory at all. "Ah..." Kaiser really didn't know what to do.

Linley looked back at Clayde.

Clayde's face was totally pale. Large beads of sweat the size of soybeans had gathered on his forehead. Right now, the amount of force Linley was exerting on him with his tail was very high.

"Continue thinking. The longer you think, the more pain you will be in." Linley's scale-covered claw reached out and grabbed Clayde's ear.

Guessing what Linley was about to do, Clayde howled, "No!"

"Riiip."

Clayde's left ear was ripped off by Linley, and he howled in agony while cursing wildly, "Linley, you bastard, you are a goddamn devil!"

"Keep on wasting time." Linley's claws slowly reached towards Clayde's face.

"This time, it'll be your eyes. Tell me, would you prefer your left eye, or your right eye?" Linley's face was still expressionless. When Clayde looked at Linley, hoping to gather anything from Linley's eyes or facial expressions, all he could see was that unmoving, scale-covered face, and those cold, merciless dark gold eyes.

"If you don't decide, I'll decide for you. Just then, it was your left ear. Now, it will be your right eye." Linley reached out with his claws.

"No! I'll talk. I'll talk." Clayde howled with all his might.

Linley retracted his claws. "Then speak."

"I'll talk. I'll talk." Tears actually appeared in Clayde's eyes. He really had mentally collapsed. Linley had no intention of sparing him whatsoever. No matter what he did, he was going to die. If he talked, at least he would die an easy death. If he didn't, he would be tortured to death.



None of the Wildthunder knights standing off in the distance dared to say a word. Linley and Bebe, man and magical beast, were really too terrifying, too formidable.

Clayde was roaring furiously in his heart, "Radiant Church, this time you didn't give a damn about me and left me behind. Don't blame me for giving you an enemy which will be terrifying to deal with in the future!"

"Linley, I'll tell you. Each year, the Radiant Church will offer extremely pure souls to the Radiant Sovereign. The Radiant Sovereign needs only two things: The faith of worshippers, and pure souls." Clayde said directly.

Linley's stared at Clayde with his emotionless eyes. "What does this have to do with my mother?"

Clayde continued, "The purer the soul offered to the Radiant Sovereign, the greater the gifts the Radiant Sovereign will bestow upon the Church. That year...my younger brother Patterson and I had just stepped out of the Radiant Temple. When I saw your mother, I was instantly stunned. Her eyes looked so pure, so innocent. From that first glance I had of your mother, my mind was made up. I had the feeling that your mother's soul must be extremely pure." After having heard this, Linley could guess the rest.

"I could tell that your father was only an ordinary person, and thus I ordered Patterson to go and directly abduct your mother. The next day, I delivered your mother to the Radiant Church."

Clayde took a deep breath. "Indeed, your mother's soul was incomparably pure. When the Radiant Church killed your mother, offering her soul as a sacrifice to the Radiant Sovereign, the Radiant Sovereign blessed them with greater gifts than they had ever received."

"And this was the reason why the Radiant Temple decided to reward me with a divine blessing like none they had ever given before. The blessing raised me directly from a warrior of the seventh rank to the ninth rank. Although it would make my future advancement impossible, I was still satisfied. In addition, the Radiant Temple gifted me with a Saint-level Fateguard."

Clayde looked at Linley. "Your mother's soul really was very remarkable. The Radiant Temple actually gave me so many things for her. From this, you can imagine how heavily the Radiant Sovereign had rewarded them when they had sacrificed your mother's soul to him."

## Chapter 21

Hearing Clayde's words, Linley fell silent.

"Haha, Linley, now you should know who your true enemy is, right? But are you capable of dealing with the Radiant Temple?" Clayde laughed wildly, on the edge of hysteria. Clayde knew that he was going to die, and at the moment of his death, he had decided to bring as much chaos to the world as he could.

"Do you speak the truth?" Linley's voice was hoarse.

Actually, Linley already believed what Clayde had just told him, precisely because this was the only possible explanation as to why the Radiant Church would have given Clayde a Saint-level Fateguard.

"You yourself know whether I speak truly or not." Clayde laughed wildly.

Linley fell silent.

"Linley, you should've considered the fact that you are a genius magus and a Dragonblood Warrior. In the eyes of the Radiant Church, you have much more potential than me, a warrior who was only raised to the ninth rank due to secret magical methods. In the future, you will most likely be both a Saint-level Supreme Warrior and a Saint-level Grand Magus. If it wasn't for this secret I just divulged, even if you had killed me, the Radiant Church probably wouldn't bear to execute you." Clayde laughed loudly.

Linley understood this reasoning.

"Clayde should be telling the truth." Doehring Cowart's voice sounded out in Linley's mind. Given Doehring Cowart's experience, his ability to judge whether someone was telling the truth or not was much better than Linley's.

Linley had deep faith in Doehring Cowart.

.....

At this time, on Keyan Road within the city of Hess, there were six ruthless looking men dressed in violet robes. These six violet-robed men all naturally emitted the aura of cold, arrogant experts, causing everyone else around them to avoid them.

These six people were heading directly for Clayde's manor.

Right now, they had no idea as to what had happened at Clayde's manor.

“Waiters [Wei’tē’si], are the Ascetics located here?” One of the violet-robed men said in a low voice.

The leader of the violet-robed men nodded. “Right. From what I understand, the Ascetics are all staying in this Clayde’s manor. This assignment of ours is extremely important. It’s best that we head out together alongside the Ascetics.”

These six people were the six Special Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal.

They had just arrived at Hess City, and this was the only address they had on hand. They didn’t know that a few minutes ago, the Ascetics had all left. They had just barely missed them.

“Hrm? Why is there no one here?”

Upon entering Clayde’s empty manor, they couldn’t help but look around in confusion. The other five Special Executors looked at Waiters. Waiters was the leader of the squad for this assignment.

“Let’s go inside and take a look.” Waiters said calmly. The six headed directly into the manor, but the inside of the manor was totally devoid of people as well.

“Linley, release my royal father. My royal father has already told you everything.” A voice rang out from beyond the back gate. Instantly, the six Special Executors turned to look at the back courtyard.

The six men’s faces turned solemn.

“Linley?”

The six men exchanged glances.

“Linley? His name is on the Red List. Kill on sight.” The six Special Executors immediately hurried towards the back gate.

The Ecclesiastical Tribunal had two special lists. One was known as the Red List. The other was the Black List.

The people on the Red List were to be killed on sight, but there was no need to expend too much effort on those targets. Those on the Black List were to be killed no matter the cost.

Actually, given Linley’s future potential, the threat he could pose towards the Radiant Church in the future should’ve been enough for him to be placed on the Black List. However, while the high levels of the Radiant Church were fleeing, they

believed that since Linley was not a member of the Church, the chances of him being able to discover that his mother had been killed by the Radiant Church was very low. Thus, they only placed Linley on the Red List.

The Special Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal all possessed astonishing power. These six Special Executors were all warriors of the ninth rank. They stealthily began to surround Linley.

.....

In the little alleyway behind the back gate of Clayde's manor.

Linley's iron-whip-like draconic tail was still wrapped tightly around Clayde.

"Release your royal father?" Linley stared at Shaq. Letting out a cold laugh, he said, "I can release your father, but what of my mother and father? Although it was the Radiant Church which killed my mother, at least half of the responsibility lies with your father. And over half the responsibility for my father's death lies on your father as well."

As Linley spoke, he began to exert more pressure with his tail.

"Crack, crack." All sorts of strange noises were emitting from Clayde's body. Clayde was in such agony from the constricting draconic tail that he began to try and struggle again.

"Ah! Ah! Linley, kill me cleanly in one stroke!" Clayde moaned in agony.

"Crunch."

Clayde's two arms snapped off. Right now, Clayde had been constricted so tightly by Linley that his formerly broad waist was now more slender than a woman's.

"Die."

Linley looked at Clayde, then exert a bit more force with his tail.

"Smush!" Clayde spat out a large amount of blood from his mouth, and his entire face turned red. While spitting the blood out, he was coughing nonstop, and some bits and pieces of his internal organs were coughed out as well.

Right now...

Clayde had been ripped into two parts at the waist. Even his spine had been snapped apart. The only thing keeping his upper body and lower body connected was a bloody layer of skin.

Clayde let out a few more moans. "Ah...ah..." His entire face was red. A few seconds later, his breathing stopped, and his soul left this earth.

But right now, Linley didn't feel any happiness or sense of accomplishment.

The only thing he felt was a deep grief, a deep sadness.

"Father. Mother. Can you see me?" Linley said to himself.

Shaq, Kaiser, the princess, and the Wildthunder knights all stared at Linley. Many of them had hearts full of fear. After seeing how Clayde had died, they didn't dare to try and avenge him. They could only hope that Linley would leave now.

Linley's dark gold eyes glanced at everyone present.

"Cough." Shaq cleared his throat, beads of sweat appearing on his forehead. His father had died, but he didn't want to die as well.

Linley's draconic tail swayed slightly, then he turned and began to walk away.

"Bebe. Let's go." He called to Bebe.

Just as Bebe, who was off to the side this entire time, was about to scurry away with him, Bebe suddenly paused, all the hair on his body sticking up. Right afterwards, Linley as well sensed sudden danger, which seemed to come from all directions.

"Whoosh."

Several gusts of wind could be heard as six violet-robed figures appeared, surrounding Linley from six different points. Linley and Bebe were both trapped within their encirclement. Four of these six were standing on nearby rooftops, while the other two were at each end of the alley Linley was in. There was no place Linley could flee to at all.

"Special Executors from the Ecclesiastical Tribunal." Linley immediately understood who these people were upon seeing their uniform.

Seeing this formation, Shaq and the Wildthunder knights all turned pale. These six Special Executors hadn't just encircled Linley and Bebe. They had also encircled Shaq and his men as well.

"Milords, I am the Second Prince of the royal clan of Fenlai. Please allow me to leave first." Shaq immediately begged.

Kaiser recognized the Special Executors from their outfit. He also immediately said, "Milord Special Executors, I am Kaiser, and I am also a servant of the Radiant Church. May I leave first?" Kaiser knew very well about some of the special methods available to the Special Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal. Given the current situation, he, Kaiser, wouldn't be of any use to them, and would actually serve to disrupt their actions."

"Kaiser, you can leave."

One of the violet-robed men standing at one of the ends of the alley said in a cold voice.

"Yes." Kaiser immediately began running towards one of the ends of the alleyway. The six violet robed men didn't block him at all, allowing him to flee past them. Kaiser was an expert of the Kingdom of Fenlai, true, but he was also a holy knight of the Radiant Church.

"Milords, what about me?" Shaq immediately said.

"Milord Special Executors." That princess immediately begged towards the Special Executors as well.

But the six Special Executors didn't even glance at them. The six Special Executors were clear-headed. When Kaiser left, he was but one person, and a warrior of the ninth rank at that. Linley definitely wouldn't be able to find a chance to slip past. But if they allowed Shaq and the others to leave as well, given Linley's current prowess, he definitely might be able to find a way to slip past at a critical moment.

Linley stared coldly at the six of them.

"You want to kill me?" Linley said calmly. He felt total confidence in himself. Even when surrounded by the attacks of that group of giant dragons, he was still able to flee and survive.

To these six Special Executors, killing him and Bebe wouldn't be an easy affair. The protective scales on Linley's body were no joking matter.

"Those on the Red List are to be killed on sight." The leader of the Special Executors laughed coldly.

The six Special Executors stared fixedly at him and Bebe, ignoring everything else entirely. As high level members of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, they naturally knew that Linley was a Dragonblood Warrior. Dragonblood Warriors were one of the Supreme Warriors. They didn't dare to look down upon him.

"Oh? Kill on sight?" Linley's draconic tail began to swing.

"Swish!" Like a steel sabre, Linley's draconic tail casually slashed across the ground, cutting a deep gouge into it. Linley's dark gold eyes were fixed on this group of people as well.

"Milord Special Executors." Shaq and his men were really terrified now.

"Let's go!" One of the Wildthunder knights let out a deep roar, and immediately, a group of knights charged en masse towards one of the alleyway exits. The remaining Wildthunder knights numbered amongst them more than ten knights of the eighth rank. For them to charge en masse like this, even a combatant of the ninth rank would find it difficult to stop them.

Linley's eyes lit up.

Linley immediately charged towards the wall on his left. Ignoring the wall's existence, Linley slammed into it as though he were a large magical beast.

"BAM!" Linley knocked the section of wall over while fleeing at high speed to the north.

"Whoosh."

The bodies of those six Special Executors suddenly began to emit a hot, burning white light. The light from these six Special Executors was totally interconnected, forming a strange, glowing hexagram.

Linley just happened to ram against one of the edges of the hexagram.

"Bam!"

Linley felt as though he had just been slapped by a Violet Tattooed Bear. His entire body quivered as he was sent flying backwards. He remained surrounded by the six Special Executors.

"Ah!!!"

The bodies of those Wildthunder knights who struck against the glowing white hexagram all exploded, drenching the area with blood. Every single one of the Wildthunder knights who had touched the glowing white hexagram died.

“What is this?” Linley was shocked.

“Linley, quick, do your best to escape! This should be one of the combination attack methods of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal.” Doehring Cowart immediately recognized the danger that Linley and Bebe were now in. If they continued to be trapped in such a manner, it was very likely that Linley and Bebe would not be able to escape at all.

Those six Special Executors charged forwards towards Linley and Bebe in a very practiced manner. And as they did, the area of movement within the hexagram began to shrink at an extremely fast rate.

“Ah!” “Ah!” “Ah!” “Ah!”

Shaq and the remaining knights who had not touched the glowing white hexagram were unable to dodge with the six Special Executors drawing closer and closer. One after another was forced to come into contact with the glowing white hexagram, and when they did, their bodies began to vibrate before exploding.

In the blink of an eye, no one in Shaq’s party was left alive.

But Linley and Bebe were trapped in an increasingly small, tight space.

“Boss, that white thing seems really powerful. What should we do?” Bebe was frantic.

Linley had both felt and could sense the power of this glowing white hexagram. When it had struck his body, he still felt extreme pain despite his defensive powers, and all the blood in his body had been agitated.

“Bebe, you go down through the earth, I’ll go up from the skies. Flee!” Linley mentally directed Bebe.

This black-scaled aberration, Linley, and his freak of a Shadowmouse companion, Bebe, acted at almost the same time. One flew up into the sky like an arrow leaving the bow, while the other burrowed deep into the ground.

## Chapter 22



“Haaah!” The six Special Executors simultaneously stomped the ground viciously, and suddenly the light around them penetrated the earth. Bebe, who had just burrowed into the earth, struck against the white light and was immediately knocked back.

“Whoosh!”

At the same time, the six Special Executors retreated at high speed, suddenly expanding the area within the glowing white hexagram. With each leap, Linley was usually only able to travel a few dozen meters to a hundred meters at most. In the end, he still had to fall to the ground after all.

As for the Soaring Technique....

Under the current conditions, he simply didn’t have enough time to utter the incantations necessary to cast the Soaring Technique.

“Haaaaah!” Bebe didn’t dare to touch the glowing white hexagram the six Special Executors had created again. Bebe jumped up in the air as well. At this time, five of the Special Executors suddenly rose into the air as well. Of those five, four rose to the same height in the air as Linley, while the last one rose above Linley.

“Whoa!” One person was above him, four were around him, and one was underneath him.

Glowing with white light, the six Special Executors had formed a totally air-tight octahedron, keeping Linley and Bebe totally sealed in within.

“What the hell is this?” Linley was rather stunned.

Doehring Cowart’s voice sounded out in Linley’s mind. “This special combination attack of these Special Executors of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal consumes an enormous amount of light-style battle-qi. But perhaps they have some secret treasures of the Radiant Temple on them. Five thousand years ago, the Radiant Temple didn’t possess such mysterious, agile combination attacks.

Even if they practiced the same type of battle-qi, every person’s battle-qi would have fine, minute differences. To be able to totally combine battle-qi like these six Special Executors were doing, to the point of even being able to transform their battle-qi to dramatically increase its power was virtually impossible. But the Radiant Temple had succeeded.

“Whoosh.”

Above, below, front and back, left and right. These six Special Executors flew towards Linley simultaneously at high speed. All six of them were wielding very thin, slender longswords.

No place to dodge!

"Boss." Bebe was frantic. Linley mentally roared, "Bebe, let's go all out against the one below us. If we can kill one of them, this formation will be broken."

"Got it."

Linley and Bebe, man and magical beast, began to fall at high speeds, launching simultaneous attacks against the combatant of the ninth rank beneath them. But the combatant of the ninth rank didn't seem to be afraid at all. On the contrary, his lips quirked up slightly, a hint of disdain and mockery on his face.

"Thruuuuum."

The white light flowed at high speeds. The light dimmed from the other five Special Executors, while the light from the one below began to blaze like the sun. Launching off from the ground, this Special Executor chopped towards Linley and Bebe with his sword.

"Ah!" Ignoring everything else, Linley struck out with his draconic tail, risking everything to try and constrict the Special Executor.

"Slash!" The sword chopped against Linley's chest. Linley only felt an incomparable degree of pain, and his protective scales instantly began to crack. It felt as though an iron rod that had been heated until it was glowing white had been pressed against his skin, causing such pain that Linley's entire body began to twitch, but he continued to constrict the Special Executor with his draconic tail. Fresh blood began to flow from Linley's wound.

The scales of the Armored Razorback Wyrms weren't able to block this sword.

"That sword blow's power was only a bit weaker than the power of a Saint-level expert." Doehring Cowart was astonished as well. After entering their combination attack formation, the attacks of the Special Executors could reach an incredible level of power.

The Radiant Temple was confident that unless the opponent was a Saint-level combatant, this formation attack would always be victorious!

"Ah!" The draconic tail gripping the Special Executor suddenly came under assault by that powerful light-style battle-qi. Linley felt enormous pain coming from his tail, but Linley continued to go all out, risking everything to constrict this opponent. Those dark golden eyes stared fixedly at the Special Executor.

"Hmph." The Special Executor let out a cold laugh.

"Bam."

White light exploded forth from the Special Executor, and Linley's draconic tail uncontrollably slackened. Linley's constrictive power simply wasn't able to overcome the opponent's counterattack.

At this time, the other five Special Executors came charging at Linley as well.

"Boss!" Bebe kicked off from Linley's shoulders, charging directly towards those five Special Executors. But on his very first attack, Bebe was struck simultaneously by all five swords, and his body was knocked back downwards.

"Bebe!" Linley said worriedly.

"Boss, I'm fine." Bebe flipped to his feet, but a hint of blood could be seen on his firm, tough fur. However, Bebe's defense really was remarkably powerful. He barely suffered any damage to his skin and fur.

These six Special Executors stared at Bebe in astonishment.

Too monstrous. Even that hadn't been able to pierce the skin of this Shadowmouse? As far as the Special Executors were concerned, even magical beasts of the ninth rank should have their defensive armor and skin be pierced by that blow.

Even someone with defense as monstrously powerful as Linley saw the scales over his chest crack and split from a single blow.

"The target is Linley!" The six of them knew that killing this monster of a Shadowmouse would probably force them to use quite some effort, but killing Linley would be much easier.

A single sword had been able to penetrate his defenses. Thus, a few sword strikes should be enough to kill him.

"What on earth is going on?! Their light-style battle-qi seems to be limitless!" Linley mentally roared with fury, as he swept his claws to attack the Special Executors who were charging towards him.

“Shkreeeee!” Bebe’s piercing screech rang out as well.

Light wrapped around their bodies, the six Special Executors did a pincer attack against Linley and Bebe, while Linley and Bebe used all their force to try and counterattack.

“BAM!!!”

A wild series of attacks. Both sides totally ignored their defense, only focusing on attacking.

The six Special Executors retreated at high speed.

More than half of Linley’s black scales were shattered now, revealing multiple wounds beneath. Fresh blood oozed out past the scales, and even the scales on Linley’s tail were shattered.

Linley wasn’t able to suppress the fresh blood which had risen to his throat, and he vomited it out.

“Their defense...” Linley was truly angry and frantic now.

He had finally met people whose defensive powers were even greater than his own. These six Special Executors were using light-style battle-qi in an extravagantly wasteful manner. Their combination formation attacks gave them both terrifying offense as well as astonishing defense. Linley’s attack hadn’t managed to wound them at all.

“Boss, are you okay?” Bebe said in shock and fright. Those beady eyes of him stared at Linley with concern.

Bebe was in much better shape than Linley. The primary target of those six Special Executors had been Linley. In addition, Bebe’s defense was even more monstrous than Linley’s. Once again, only a hint of blood could be seen on Bebe’s fur.

“Fi, fine.” Linley wiped the blood from his mouth.

“That was the first attack.”

One of the violet-robed Special Executors standing on a distant rooftop said calmly, “Your defense isn’t bad. Let’s see how many of our formation attacks you can take.”

“Waiters, let’s not waste time.” One of the other Special Executors also standing on a rooftop said coldly.

“Move.” The Special Executor shouted in a loud voice.

Many of the buildings nearby had toppled, and the battle aroused the interest of a large number of powerful combatants, who were watching from afar. But seeing such a large scale, intense battle, they didn’t dare draw too near.

The aura of that powerful light-style battle-qi alone filled them with dread.

“Swish!” The six Special Executors moved at the same time, transforming into six streaks of white light that flew towards Linley. Surrounded on all sides by the walls of light, Linley had nowhere to run.

Linley ground his teeth.

“Raaaaaargh!” Linley let out an angry howl, then pulled out the adamantine heavy sword from his back, wildly chopping it towards the six Special Executors.

“BOOM.” Linley’s adamantine heavy sword collided viciously against a Special Executor, who didn’t even attempt to dodge. That Special Executor suddenly felt a terrifying force passing towards him.

“Hrm?” The violet-robed Special Executor was knocked flying backwards by the blow, but under the protection of that light-style battle-qi, he still didn’t suffer any major injuries.

Only a heavy sword such as this could allow the astonishing power of a Dragonblood Warrior to be put on full display.

“Slash!”

The other five swords continued to chop at Linley’s body. Linley used his claws, his tail, and the spikes on his body to wildly attack, and the five Special Executors once more flew backwards.

Linley fell to one knee.

The majority of the scales on Linley’s body were shattered now, and that wound on his chest had suffered yet another slash. The wound was so deep that Linley’s bones could be seen, and it was rapidly oozing blood.

However, the Dragonblood Warrior’s powerful bloodline gave Linley an extremely fast recovery.

Linley’s muscles were constantly rippling and stretching out, try to once more mend themselves and stitch themselves back together. This wound, however, was simply

too severe. Even Linley's bloodline only resulted in the wound growing stronger. The loss of a large amount of blood, however, was causing Linley to grow dizzy.

"The next one will be the one that kills you."

One of the six Special Executors said arrogantly. Filled with fear, Bebe crouched next to Linley. Both Linley and Bebe felt a sense of despair.

"Hmph." Linley angrily shook his head, forcing himself to try and focus a little.

But he had lost too much blood, and even Linley's vision had grown slightly blurred. But right at this moment, a magical, illusory ray of light shone forth from the Coiling Dragon ring, transforming into an old man with white robes, a white beard, and white hair.

"Grandpa Doehring." Linley was startled. He didn't understand why Doehring Cowart had appeared all of a sudden.

Doehring Cowart looked exactly the way he did when Linley had first encountered him. A little smile on his face, Doehring Cowart gently rubbed Linley on the head.

"Linley, in the future, you'll have to rely on yourself." Doehring Cowart said, a fond smile on his face.

"Grandpa Doehring, what are you..." Linley was stunned.

Doehring Cowart's spirit suddenly rose into the air. Hovering a meter above the ground, he spread his hands wide. A terrifyingly powerful burst of spiritual energy suddenly erupted forth from Doehring Cowart.

Right now, Doehring Cowart felt extremely calm and at peace.

"In the past, when I lived in the Pouant Empire, my life was a life of training and slaughter. In the Pouant Empire, I was extremely arrogant and a difficult person to get close to. I had no children and no grandchildren. But after having spent five thousand years in the Coiling Dragon ring, my temperament has changed. And then, I met you, Linley."

Hovering in the air, Doehring Cowart was still gazing at Linley.

"Grandpa Doehring, what are you going to do?" Linley had an terrible premonition...

"I've watched you grow up and become mature, one step at a time. In my heart, I felt very proud of your successes. I've even come to consider you as my own grandson." The amount of spiritual energy Doebling Cowart was emitting grew even greater.

The amount of spiritual energy was so high that aside from powerful combatants such as Linley and the six Special Executors, even those warriors watching the battle from far away could sense it. All of the six Special Executors were shocked and alarmed.

"Linley, don't be sad. In truth, trapped as I am within this Coiling Dragon ring, I don't have much of a future. Let this, then, be one final demonstration of my power." Doebling Cowart's smile became all the more brilliant.

But Linley was now shaking with terror.

"What is going on?!" The six Special Executors were beginning to be genuinely frightened. That vortex of spiritual energy was simply too powerful, so powerful that they too were beginning to quake with fear.

The power unleashed when a peak-stage Saint-level combatant was igniting the spiritual energy present in his very soul was incomparably more powerful than the power which even a peak-stage Saint-level combatant normally possessed.

"WHOOSH!" All of the earth elemental essence around the entire city of Hess suddenly flowed towards Doebling Cowart at high speed. Bound by Doebling Cowart's terrifyingly powerful spiritual energy, all of the earth elemental essence began to coalesce.

No mageforce. This was a spell that relied solely on spiritual energy to control the earth elemental essence!

Under normal conditions, this would render the attack power of the earth spell to be very weak. But the spell which Doebling Cowart was now casting was so powerful that one could only shiver in terror.

"HEAVENLY METEOR'S DESCENT!"

Doebling Cowart's spirit had begun to grow blurry, but his voice remained as cold and calm as that of a celestial spirit. Six enormous earth-colored meteors fell forth from the sky, smashing towards those six Special Executors.

"SWOOSH!" Those six gigantic meteors formed purely from earth elemental essence, each the size of a house, smashed towards the six men at such a high speed that it seemed as though they were tearing through space itself.

Those six Special Executors fled in terror, but those six meteors only chased after them.

“Linley.” Doehring Cowart looked at Linley. “Goodbye.”

Linley looked up at Grandpa Doehring, with his white beard, white hair, and white robe.

“Remember this. Live well.” Doehring Cowart’s face suddenly blossomed into his trademark smile...and then his now translucent spirit disappeared, like smoke being blown away by the wind.

Linley opened his mouth, but felt as though no words could come from his throat. His tears began to uncontrollably roll down his face.

“Ah...Ah!!!” As though he were mute and incapable of speech, Linley howled to the heavens, and his tears came pouring down.

## Chapter 23

“BAM!” “BAM!” “BAM!” “BAM!”

.....

The six giant meteors smashed down viciously towards those six Special Executors. The six Special Executors all used their hands to rip the ground apart beneath them and try to tunnel downwards.

Those six giant meteors struck the ground, causing the earth to shake furiously with colossal booms, as though giant waves of thunder were suddenly emanating from the ground.

“BOOOOM!”

Six massive, deep gouges appeared in the earth, each of them around ten meters wide. The tremendous shockwaves spread out in all directions, and the earth itself began to buckle and roil about, toppling houses and snapping trees in every which way.

Within a circular area with a circumference of several hundred meters, everything was turned to dust.



This terrifying explosive boom caused the entirety of Hess City to take notice. Whether it was the Ascetics who had just stepped out of the gates of Hess City, or the men of the Dawson Conglomerate, or other powerful experts, everyone felt the vibrations coming from this place.

.....

The roiling waves of force reached Linley as well, but Linley only stood there like an idiot, not moving at all. He allowed the waves of force to buffet him as they pleased.

Linley just stood there like an idiot, his tears flowing down without stopping.

“Ah...ah...ah...” Linley seemed to have forgotten how to speak, and his entire body trembled with panic and heartbreak as he roared into the sky.

Linley fell to his knees.

A sense of utter heartbreak, of his heart being ripped to shreds, consumed Linley.

Linley’s mind suddenly began to swim with images of him and Doebling Cowart together.

.....

That first time he had seen that ray of light transform into an old man with white robes, white beard, and white hair. The child-Linley had shouted in astonishment, “You...who are you?”

“Hello, kiddo. My name is Doebling Cowart. I am a Saint-level Grand Magus of the Pouant Empire!” That was the first time Doebling Cowart had interacted with Linley.

....

“Grandpa Doebling, why aren’t you talking? How is the strength of my affinity for earth elemental essence?” The first time Linley had been tested for his talent as a magus.

“Good. Extremely good. Your affinity for earth elemental essence is extremely high.” Doebling Cowart’s face was wreathed in smiles. “Based on what I know, only perhaps one in a thousand magi would have as strong an affinity for earth elemental essence as you. Truly.” Doebling Cowart’s praise had caused child-Linley to be unspeakably excited.

....

A Saint-level Grand Magus of the era of the Pouant Empire. A young child. And so, under the tutelage of this Grand Magus of the Pouant Empire, the child embarked on the road to being a magus.

.....

Stonesculpting using the Straight Chisel School method. Training within the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts. Under the tutelage of the experienced Doebling Cowart, Linley had progressed and matured at an astonishing rate.

But when Linley had become the center of attention for everyone...

...no one knew that behind him stood the spirit of a Saint-level Grand Magus of the era of the Pouant Empire.

....

"Linley. In the future, you'll have to rely on yourself." Grandpa Doebling had fondly rubbed Linley's head one last time.

After casting that world-shaking forbidden spell, 'Heavenly Meteor's Descent', Grandpa Doebling had faded away.

"Linley. Goodbye."

"Remember this. Live well."

.....

Linley's mind swam with images of the time he had spent with his Grandpa Doebling. That kindly, forbearing old man who had taught Linley so much, had long since become someone whom Linley couldn't bear to be apart from.

"No...no...."

Linley shook his head repeatedly.

He wasn't willing to believe it. Grandpa Doebling had truly passed away. What's more, his very soul had dissipated upon his death.

"Impossible. Grandpa Doebling, come out. Come out." Linley stared at the Coiling Dragon ring, howling nonstop at first, before his words took on begging tones as his tears splashed against his ice cold scales.

Blood continued to leak out of Linley's body, but Linley didn't feel anything at all.

“Grandpa Doehring.”

Linley so dearly hoped that once more, that ray of white light would shine forth from the Coiling Dragon ring and transform into the white bearded, white haired, white robed Grandpa Doehring. Linley simply couldn't believe that Grandpa Doehring had died, just like that. Never to be by his side again.

He had been together with Grandpa Doehring since he was a child.

Since then, Linley had never been separated from Grandpa Doehring. Never!

In the depths of his heart, Linley had truly become accustomed long ago to Grandpa Doehring's presence. Even when Linley had been imprisoned within the Radiant Temple, he hadn't felt as alone or as helpless as he did now.

His heart had always been steady...because behind him, he had the support of Grandpa Doehring.

But now...

Grandpa Doehring had left forever. Forever!

“Why. Why.” Linley's voice was shaking. “Heaven, first my mother died, then my father died. Why. Why did you have to take even Grandpa Doehring away as well?”

“WHY!!!” Linley raised his head, howling towards the heavens.

His voice echoed in the sky.

“Ah...ah....” Linley fell to his knees, powerless. He began to sob madly, but no matter how hard Linley cried, that kindly old man would never appear again.

He had died and left forever.

“Grandpa Doehring.”

Linley felt more feeble and fragile than he ever had before. It was a spiritual fragility. No father. No mother. And now, even Grandpa Doehring, who had always been by his side, had left.

The only one left by Linley's side was Bebe, who had never even known about Grandpa Doehring's existence.

“Boss. Hey, Linley, Boss!” Bebe nudged Linley, somewhat frightened.

Linley turned his head to look at Bebe.

“Bebe.” Linley suddenly pulled Bebe into his arms.

“Boss, just now, you were calling out for a ‘Grandpa Doehring’. Who is Grandpa Doehring? Just now, I sensed a terrifying spiritual energy burst. What was that?” Bebe was totally baffled.

Linley’s heart was shot through with agony once more upon hearing Grandpa Doehring’s name.

He lowered his head to look at the Coiling Dragon ring on his finger. But...Grandpa Doehring would never come out from it again.

“Rustle.” Suddenly, a series of extremely light sounds could be heard. Linley turned his head to look.

Within the giant craters created by the meteors, a violet-robed figure was struggling to crawl out. Not only him. The other five men were also slowly struggling to crawl out as well.

Heavenly Meteor’s Descent – An earth-style forbidden spell.

If a Saint-level Grand Magus were to use this spell, the six of them would have been dead without a doubt. But Doehring Cowart was a Saint-level Grand Magus who didn’t have a single shred of mageforce.

Based on the laws of magic, mageforce was the generals commanding the army of soldiers known as elemental essence. Through mageforce, spiritual energy was able to command these soldiers to form powerful magical spells.

What Doehring Cowart had done was to consume the spiritual energy within his very soul, using this powerful burst of spiritual energy to directly control the elemental essences and execute the forbidden spell, Heavenly Meteor’s Descent.

But because he had no mageforce, even though he consumed all of his own spiritual energy, the power of Doehring Cowart’s spell was only 10% – 20% of a normal Heavenly Meteor’s Descent. Despite that though, even 10% to 20% of the power of a forbidden spell had smashed those six Special Executors to the brink of death.

Watching those six violet robed figures crawl out, Linley’s heart was suddenly filled with unbridled, boundless, unquenchable rage.

“Ah!!!!” With a scream, Linley charged like a bolt of lightning towards one of the violet robed figures. The Special Executor, seeing Linley charge towards him, was so terrified that his eyes turned as round as the moon.

“Ah!!!!” Exerting force with his arms, Linley ripped the Special Executor into two halves with his bare hands.

“Die.” Linley physically ripped off the head of another Special Executor.

“Haaaargh!” Linley’s sharp claws pierced into the chest of a third Special Executor, ripping his heart out and crushing it to pieces with his claws.

“Go die!” Linley latched onto the throat of the fourth Special Executor with his teeth, ripping his throat out.

He wanted to eat their flesh and drink their blood!

“Ah!!!!” Linley’s figure suddenly appeared next to the fifth Special Executor. The heavily wounded Special Executor, unable to defend himself, could only watch in terror as Linley ripped him apart into two pieces by his legs.

As for the sixth Special Executor...

“You...you...” The heavily wounded sixth Special Executor, upon seeing the terrifying scene before him, saw Linley charge towards him like a demon from the Infernal Realm. He was so terrified that his body began to shake, and then he collapsed dead from fear.

Although the sixth Special Executor was already dead, Linley still smashed a vicious punch at his head, exploding it.

Watching this, Bebe was somewhat frightened.

The warriors watching from far away had been scared stupid as well. They had never imagined that a human could be so vicious, so brutal, so terrifying. This was especially true because of how Linley currently appeared. His body was covered in broken scales, and blood dyed his entire form red. Even his dark gold eyes were dimly flashing red.

“Boss, you...you...what’s wrong?” Bebe was worried.

After Linley had brutally killed all six Special Executors, he suddenly sat down on the ground, his energy gone. He sat there, staring into nothing, with no clue as to what he was thinking.

"Boss." Bebe pushed Linley frantically.

Linley suddenly raised his head, but he was unable to restrain his tears from coming out again. He then lowered his head, burying it against his legs and beginning to cry once more.

.....

Those six giant meteors had turned the entire area around for hundreds of meters into rubble. Those six violet-robed men had all been killed by that demonic freak.

But then, that demonic freak suddenly put his head against his legs and began to sob.

.....

There were nearly ten thousand onlookers now, watching from hundreds of meters away. None of these people could understand what they were seeing.

"That demon is crying?"

All of them were astonished.

"That demon seems...seems really sad." A young person said uncertainly to a nearby friend of his. That friend started, then nodded slowly.

None of the onlookers moved any closer. They had seen the terrifying scene of just moments ago. Even the combatants of the eighth rank knew exactly how much stronger this person in front of them was.

"The demon is crying?" Yale, George, and Reynolds had just gotten here, having travelled quite far. Hearing these words, they all started.

"Out of the way! Out of the way!" Yale shouted angrily.

Immediately, the guards of the Dawson Conglomerate began to push aside the various onlookers. Yale, George, and Reynolds ran frantically towards the center of the battlefield.

But upon reaching the epicenter, all of them were stunned.

Everything within several hundred meters had been turned to rubble. Looking at the six craters, one could imagine how terrifyingly powerful those six giant meteors had been. And just looking at the corpses of those six men, one could imagine how brutal the person who had killed them was.

The demon's body, covered with broken scales, was sitting there, sobbing.

Upon seeing Bebe by the side of the 'demon', and that adamantine heavy sword which had been tossed to the ground, Yale and the others became all the more certain that this was Linley.

"Third Bro." Yale, George, and Reynolds immediately rushed over.

By now, Monroe Dawson had arrived as well. He immediately ordered his subordinates, "Quick, dispose of those six corpses, then leave immediately. Don't let anyone know that the Dawson Conglomerate had anything to do with this." As he spoke, Monroe Dawson immediately left as well.

"Third Bro." Yale, George, and Reynolds all called out with worry.

Back during Linley's assassination attempt on Clayde at Fenlai City, Yale had already guessed that Linley was capable of transforming into a Dragonblood Warrior. He had informed Reynolds and George as well. And now, seeing Bebe as well as the discarded adamantine heavy sword, they naturally were certain that this was Linley.

Linley's body shook slightly.

Raising his head and glancing besides himself, Linley saw Yale, George, and Reynolds. Linley finally spoke. "You guys..."

"Let's go, quick." Yale immediately urged. "You just killed Special Executors. If the Radiant Church finds out, it'll be a disaster for you." Yale immediately helped Linley up.

Linley allowed himself to be raised to his feet.

"Bebe. Let's go." Linley hugged Bebe, then headed out.

Yale was startled, because he noticed that Linley didn't pay any attention at all to his adamantine heavy sword. He couldn't help but call out urgently, "Third Bro, your heavy sword."

"Heavy sword?" Linley turned his head. After a moment, he seemed to understand, and he walked over, picking his heavy sword up.

Just then, the subordinates of the Dawson Conglomerate arrived as well, and they quickly disposed of those six violet robed Special Executors' corpses.

"What's wrong with Third Bro?" George said quietly to Yale and Reynolds.

Yale shook his head as well, confused. "No idea. Bebe seems to be fine as well. Why then does it seem as though Third Bro just suffered a worse blow than that time when he had his heart broken? He seems so downcast that it is like he has lost his soul."

Linley allowed the Dawson Conglomerate's men to lead him away, as they crept away via small alleyways and arrived at a mysterious residence.

## Chapter 24

Within the dark, quiet residence, there was only Reynolds, Yale, George, a few dozen female attendants, and a few dozen guards. All of them were here for Linley.

Beneath branches of hanging grapes, George, Yale, and Reynolds were standing around a stone desk.

"Boss Yale. What do you think is going on with Third Bro?" Reynolds face was filled with confusion as he said helplessly.

Yale shook his head. "I don't know either. It's been ten days since Third Bro has come here, and in these past ten days, Third Bro hasn't had any of his usual energy. He isn't even training, nor does he joke around and laugh with us anymore. He's always off by himself."

George nodded as well. "In the past, no matter what happened, Third Bro wouldn't stop his training. But now he seems to have transformed into a totally different person."

"So who can tell me what exactly is going on with Third Bro?" Reynolds gnashed his teeth. "It would be great if I knew." Yale sighed resignedly.

The thing which hurt their heads the most was that they had no idea what had caused Linley to become like this. He no longer trained, nor did he joke around with the three of them. He was always off by himself, looking as though he had lost his soul.

He had become like this for no apparent reason whatsoever.

As the dear bros of Linley, how could they not be worried?



“Third Bro must have suffered some sort of tremendous shock.” Yale sighed quietly. George and Reynolds were all startled for a moment, then they fell silent. They couldn’t help but think back to what they had seen that day.

Thousands of observers surrounding a circular area where everything for hundreds of meters around had been reduced to rubble. Within that disaster area, those six astonishingly deep craters and fallen meteors.

Linley, in full Dragonform, had brutally massacred those six Special Executors, then sat down and began to cry. He had been sobbing like a child. “I’ve never seen Third Bro this heartbroken, this fragile.” Yale said in a low voice.

George nodded as well. “Third Bro is very tough. Even when he suffered heartbreak from breaking up with Alice, after completing the ‘Awakening From the Dream’ sculpture, he headed directly for the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts to engage in more training.”

“Right. Even when his father died, Third Bro had managed to endure and hold on. But this time...” Reynold simply couldn’t understand.

They were all certain that their beloved bro was in a fragile state right now, but none of them could find a reason why.

Next to a murmuring creek in the back courtyard of the residence, Linley was sitting on top of a decorative polished stone. He stared at the creek, not moving.

Bebe was standing on the stone as well, right next to Linley.

Utter silence. The only sound that could be heard was the murmurs of the flowing water.

Although Linley’s eyes were aimed at the creek, his thoughts were still with Grandpa Doehring and the time they had spent together.

How he had played around with Grandpa Doehring as a child.

How Grandpa Doehring had strictly supervised and trained him as a young man.

In the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts, how Grandpa Doehring had lectured him time and time again to be careful without growing tired of it.

With each memory swimming to the surface, Linley felt his heart grow still.

"After my father died, I thought that I was now very lonely. But I didn't realize that in reality, I was very fortunate. No matter what happened, Grandpa Doehring was always behind me, supporting me, consoling me, encouraging me, reminding me..."

"But why didn't I realize this in the past? Why didn't I treasure the time I had spent together with Grandpa Doehring?" Linley's heart was filled with agony.

Grandpa Doehring had never made any excessive requests of him, but he had never considered about how Grandpa Doehring had felt. He hadn't truly valued the time he had spent with Grandpa Doehring. Perhaps subconsciously, he had believed that Grandpa Doehring would forever be with him within the Coiling Dragon ring.

"Coiling Dragon ring? Grandpa Doehring was always inside the Coiling Dragon ring by himself. It must have been very painful and miserable for him to always be alone in there. Grandpa Doehring probably also hoped that I would chat with him often, right?" Only now did Linley think of these things.

But...

In the past, Linley usually would only ask for Grandpa Doehring's advice when he met with some insurmountable difficulties. He would very rarely actively seek out Grandpa Doehring just to chat.

He only took, without giving back.

"Why is it that only after I have lost, that I now understand how to cherish?" Linley's body began to tremble. How he hoped that Grandpa Doehring would return and would be by his side again.

Unfortunately....

This was impossible.

Grandpa Doehring was dead. Dead and gone forever.

Linley could feel his heart clenching, as though it were contorting. His entire body was convulsing with pain. But there wasn't a hint of pain on Linley's face.

Deep in Linley's heart, he even began to think...

If he could just die now from the pain, then he would have escaped from it all.

"Boss." Bebe's voice rang out in Linley's head. Linley turned to look at Bebe. Bebe's beady little black eyes were staring at Linley, a look of concern in them.

"You...you are thinking about that Grandpa Doehring again?" Even Bebe only learned after Doehring Cowart's death that Linley previously had a ghost Saint-level Grand Magus by his side.

Linley nodded.

Bebe mentally spoke to Linley. "Boss, can you...can you tell me all about that Grandpa Doehring?"

Looking at Bebe, Linley nodded slightly, then reached out and held Bebe in his arms, hugging him. He began to tell Bebe all about Doehring Cowart. "That year, I was eight years old. There were two Saint-level combatants who had appeared at Wushan township...."

Standing outside the gate to the back courtyard, Reynolds and the others quietly watched as Linley hugged Bebe while seated on that smooth, polished decorative stone.

"I feel extremely miserable myself, seeing Third Bro like this." Reynolds sighed softly.

Yale and George were both silent.

"We have to think of something." George's eyes suddenly sharpened, became fierce. "No matter what, we can't let Third Bro just collapse like this."

Yale and Reynolds both nodded.

"Second Bro, do you have any ideas?" Reynolds and Yale looked at George.

George said, "We have no idea what has caused Third Bro to become like this. But there are a few things that we can extrapolate." George said gravely, "Third Bro's clan was the Dragonblood Warrior clan. As a clan which once dominated the entire world, the members of the clan naturally wish to revive their clan to their former glory."

Yale's eyes lit up. "Right. Third Bro values his clan highly. For the sake of acquiring his ancestral heirloom, the warblade 'Slaughterer', he was even willing to auction off 'Awakening From the Dream'."

"Exactly."

George nodded. "My theory is, the reason why Third Bro was always so hard on himself in training was because he had something important to him that was driving

him. Most likely, restoring his clan to its former glory was that motivating impulse. Third Bro has worked hard for so many years now. He definitely wouldn't give up that easily. We have to use this to agitate and encourage him."

"Agitate him? Would that work?" Yale was a bit suspicious.

George said helplessly, "Do we have a better method of helping him?"

"We'll use this method." Reynolds harrumphed. "I can't stand watching Third Bro continue to act like this any longer. Let's go. The three of us will go talk with him. Let's see what exactly is going on."

"Fourth Bro, let Second Bro do the talking. The more you talk, the more you screw things up." Yale reproved.

Knowing his own temperament, Reynolds nodded. George, Yale, and Reynolds looked at each other, then walked towards Linley.

After listening to Linley's story, Bebe was quiet as well. He was also very heart-sick, heart-sick for Doehring Cowart's death. Suddenly, Bebe felt people approaching them from behind. He leaped out of Linley's arms and looked towards that direction.

It was Yale, George, and Reynolds.

But right now, having just finished the tale of Grandpa Doehring, Linley was lost in his memories once more, and didn't even realize that people were approaching him.

Yale, George, and Reynolds glanced at each other, all sighing internally. Linley was an expert. Normally, Linley probably would've noticed the three of them before they had even entered the courtyard. But now, all three of them were right behind Linley, and yet Linley didn't react at all.

"Third Bro." Yale spoke.

Linley trembled, then slightly turned his head to look at the three of them. His eyes were very calm. "You guys came." After speaking, Linley turned his head back towards the creek, continuing to stare at the water.

Yale, George, and Reynolds immediately walked to stand next to the boulder Linley was sitting on.

"Third Bro." Yale suddenly grabbed Linley by his shoulders, forcing Linley to look at him. "Third Bro, do you remember those things which had happened at the Ernst Institute, and what you often said to me?"

"Forgot." Linley said calmly.

Yale stared. "Forgot? Third Bro, you often put me down, saying that I don't work hard or train hard, and that in our dorm, I would be the weakest out of us four, despite physically being the largest."

Back when the four of them were dorm-mates, naturally they would often joke with each other.

But Linley remained silent.

George looked at Yale, nodding slightly. Yale released Linley's shoulders, and then George walked in front of Linley, saying solemnly, "Third Bro, I want to ask you. You have trained so bitterly for all these years. What was it all for?"

Linley started.

He couldn't help but think about how he had been focused on training, ever since he was young.

"For the clan." Linley finally responded.

Next to him, a hint of delight appeared on the faces of Yale and Reynolds. George immediately said, "Then let me ask you this. As you are now, are you behaving responsibly towards your clan?"

Looking at George, Linley smiled bitterly. In a dreary, desolate voice, he said, "My father's dead. My mother's dead. Tell me. What's the point of working hard on behalf of the clan?"

Linley rose to his feet, walking towards the back courtyard.

Yale, George, and Reynolds all stared at Linley's back, then exchange stunned looks.

"Pointless. Everyone is dead. What's the point of doing my best?" Linley's desolate voice said desolately, before he disappeared past the door.

Fifteen days.

Linley had stayed within the residence for fifteen days. During these fifteen days, Yale and the others had tried everything they could think of, but no matter what they did, Linley remained as he had.

George, Reynolds, and Yale were seated together, drinking unhappily.

“What should we do? What exactly should we do? We can’t just watch as Third Bro drowns in this abyss of despair.” Reynolds angrily smashed the wine cup against the floor.

Yale and George both shook their heads as well.

These past few days, they had tried everything they could. They also asked Linley what had caused him to become like this, but Linley didn’t say a word, remaining silent.

What could they do?

“When I see how silent Third Bro is, I really worry about him. My heart hurts. Third Bro, alas...” Yale grabbed the bottle of wine and poured it directly into his mouth, drinking half of it at a swig.

They had grown up alongside Linley, and their love for each other was even greater than that between real brothers. How could they just watch as Linley collapsed like this?

Seated on a chair within his room, Linley stared at the Coiling Dragon ring on his hand. Linley could clearly recollect how Grandpa Doehring looked each time he came out of the ring.

But that scene would never, ever play out again.

On Linley’s other hand, he was wearing a second ring, an interspatial ring. After Clayde had died, the ring and its contents had become items without an owner. When he had been engaging in battle against the six Special Executors, the blood from Linley’s body had covered the ring long ago, and it naturally had become personalized and bound to him.

But...

These past fifteen days, Linley hadn’t so much as glanced at this interspatial ring or its contents. His mind was elsewhere. Even when he didn’t actively dwell on it, his thoughts would always turn to scenes of him together with Grandpa Doehring. How Grandpa Doehring had looked when stroking his beard, or how he had looked when he was sternly instructing Linley. All sorts of memories, all of them so clear and vivid.

“Why. Why. Even Grandpa Doehring, the last person I had, was taken away?”

After having lost Grandpa Doehring, Linley had also lost his strongest source of support. He felt more fragile and more lonely than he ever had before. Linley tightly held Bebe in his arms. In that quiet little room, he continued to sit there, alone...

## Chapter 25

At the borders of the Kingdom of Hess was an army numbering over 800,000 soldiers. On a vast expanse of ground, military camps dotted the land like a series of mountain ranges, limitless and without end. This enormous army was, however, quite organized.

But in front of the military camp, there was a vast expanse of empty land.

"Hey, Uncle Rand [Lan'te]. If the army of magical beasts attack, will we be able to hold?" An armored young man who looked to be in sixteen or seventeen said in a soft voice.

Next to him was a muscular, bearded man. Removing a small flagon of liquor from his pouch, he took a small swig, then laughed loudly. "Relax. This time, in addition to the elite troops of our Kingdom of Hess, the knights of the Radiant Temple have been sent by the Radiant Church, along with many lord magi. Don't worry. The spells of magi are quite powerful."

"Right." This was the young man's first battle. Hearing the words of the veteran, he felt slightly steadier.

But that muscular man was sighing to himself inside. Because he, in fact, had seen how vicious and powerful magical beasts were. If thousands or tens of thousands of magical beasts charged towards them, the only way humanity would be able to survive was by paying a price in blood.

"Roaaaar!"

Suddenly, a low growl could be heard coming from an extremely far distance.

"Uncle Rand, I think I heard something." The young man was growing nervous.

"It's fine." Rand said loudly, but suddenly, Rand squinted and looked to the south. Atop that barren, empty plain, a countless number of thickly clustered dots could be seen.

"Magical beasts. A horde of magical beasts!"

From another part of the military camp, a shrill cry rang out. Instantly, the entire military camp began to move. From the highest ranking generals to the lowest level soldiers, everyone heightened their vigilance.

The entire 800,000 man army was preparing to do battle.

“So, so many!” Many human soldiers, upon seeing the horde of magical beasts off in the distance, couldn’t help but suck in a cold breath. From far away, countless Vampiric Iron Bulls had formed into a series of formation lines. Their muscles knotted, they were charging towards the humans at high speed.

There was well over ten thousand Vampiric Iron Bulls.

“Rumble, rumble.” The Vampiric Iron Bulls charged wildly, causing the very ground to shake. The eyes of each and every Vampiric Iron Bull had turned red, and their bodies were emitting flames. They looked like a sea of fire.

The shaking earth. The endless sea of flame.

“Swish!” “Swish!” “Swish!”

Suddenly, the sky became filled with many translucent, azure-colored javelins. These javelins fell down upon the Vampiric Iron Bulls like the rain.

“The lord magi!” Many human soldiers exulted.

“Puchiii!” Every single javelin possessed astonishing power. As one of the water-style’s pure water-element spells, they were extremely powerful against fire-type magical beasts.

These icy javelins descended, either piercing into the ground or into the bodies of the Vampiric Iron Bulls. “Puchiii!” Some of the icy javelins penetrated directly through the internal organs of the Vampiric Iron Bulls, who roared in fury, ran a few steps more, then collapsed.

One Vampiric Iron Bull after another died, but the vast majority of them continued to charge forward. Even if they had suffered some light injuries, they would only grow more furious.

Fresh blood stained the ground.

“Snooort!” The Vampiric Iron Bulls roared angrily.

“Archers! Ready...Fire!” The officers shouted loudly.



Instantly, the skies were filled with countless arrows. The thickly clustered arrows arced down from the heavens in a dense wave.

One sharp arrow after another struck the Vampiric Iron Bulls, but their tough, knotted muscles easily deflected many of the arrows.

The tactics which human armies used against other human armies wasn't necessarily effective against magical beasts.

"Pikemen, formations!"

One heavily armored and thickly muscled warrior after another strode forward, all holding steel pikes. Assuming a defensive formation, they quietly awaited the onslaught of the Vampiric Iron Bulls. "Snoooooort!" The red-eyed Vampiric Iron Bulls charged forward.

Countless steel pikes were there to welcome the Vampiric Iron Bulls, but the Vampiric Iron Bulls only lowered their horns and continued to charge forward while roaring. Like a solid flood, they slammed viciously against the pikes.

"Puchiiii!" The Vampiric Iron Bulls were skewered by those steel pikes.

The people capable of wielding steel pikes were all at least warriors of the third rank. In addition, all of the pikemen were mutually supporting each other in their bristling pike formation, borrowing and lending strength as needed.

The first wave of Vampiric Iron Bulls were not able to break this defensive line. But behind them, more Vampiric Iron Bulls continued to charge.

The battle between the army of magical beasts and the army of men was extremely fierce. The army of beasts was composed of more than just Vampiric Iron Bulls. There were also packs of Windwolves, and also elite prides of the even more terrifying Fire Lions. There were also Landwyrms, Velocidragons, and more...

But the human army wasn't weak either. In addition to the ordinary common soldiers, they also possessed some truly powerful magi who hadn't yet made their moves. In addition, the Radiant Church had also sent a number of magi of the seventh, eighth, and even ninth ranks. There was also a division of elite Knights of the Radiant Temple...

The battle raged for three days, and in the end, the human army was forced to retreat. In just three days, the human side had lost over 300,000 soldiers, and the number of wounded was even more staggering. But the magical beast's army had suffered high casualties as well.

However, both armies seemed to have a tacit understanding, as neither side made use of their Saint-level combatants. The Saint-level combatants only watched from afar, and didn't act.

Hess City was in a state of chaos.

This battle at the border had resulted in the human army retreating a hundred kilometers at once. They were now extremely close to Hess City, and many of the people within Hess City had made the decision to evacuate.

Hess City. The quiet manor where Linley was residing.

"Yale, we're leaving immediately. Quick. Don't waste any more time." Monroe Dawson shouted. "I expect that the human army won't be able to hold for many more days. The flames of war are about to engulf Hess City."

Yale nodded. "Understood, father."

"But Third Bro, he..." Yale was still concerned about Linley. George and Reynolds, by Yale's side, were both worried as well.

Monroe Dawson frowned. "How about this. You go try to persuade him one final time. No matter what though, we must leave tonight." After he spoke, Monroe Dawson turned and left.

Yale, George, and Reynolds looked at each other.

Finally, the three of them headed in the direction of Linley's room. As soon as they entered the rear courtyard, they saw Linley sitting on a chair next to a stone table, calmly staring at the straight chisel in his hand. Seeing this, Yale, George, and Reynolds didn't feel happy or excited at all.

For the sake of wanting to help Linley wake up, they would often place the straight chisel there, along with sculptures. But Linley didn't seem to have any desire at all to sculpt. Each time he saw the chisel, he would think back to how Grandpa Doehring had painstakingly trained him to sculpt.

He could still remember how proud and majestic Grandpa Doehring had looked when he had first imparted to Linley the secrets of the Straight Chisel school. At that moment, Grandpa Doehring really had the regal bearing of a grandmaster.

"Third Bro." Yale walked directly over to him.

Linley raised his head to look at Yale. A smile formed on his face, but he said nothing.

“Third Bro, the army of magical beasts is about to break through the borders. The human side has already been forced to retreat a hundred kilometers. It’s only a matter of time before they break into Hess City. We have to leave.” Yale said solemnly. “Leave?” Linley was briefly startled. “Oh. Got it.”

Seeing how Linley was acting, Reynolds, the most hot-tempered of the four, grabbed Linley by his clothes. Staring straight into Linley’s eyes, he angrily shouted, “Third Bro, what the hell is wrong with you? Speak! Why have you become like this? The person whom I, Reynolds, admire most in this world is you. I often brag to others about you. But now? Look at yourself! Look at what you have become!”

“Admire me?” Linley said self-mockingly. “Admire what?”

“I heard Boss Yale say that because of the enmity between you and Clayde, you were willing to throw away everything to be able to kill him. You dared to act and you dared to accept the consequences. As your brother, I admired you! But now? You killed Clayde, then you killed six Special Executors of the Radiant Church. Isn’t this something you should be proud of? Why have you become like this?” Reynolds was truly furious now.

Next to him, George frowned.

“Third Bro.” George suddenly shouted at Linley.

Reynolds and Yale both turned to look at George. Linley looked at him as well.

“Third Bro, why did you kill those six Special Executors?” George asked with a shout. George suddenly realized...even if Linley were to kill Clayde, there was no reason for Special Executors of the Radiant Church to try and kill Linley.

After all, Clayde was no longer one of their kings. “They wanted to kill me.” Linley said in a low voice.

“Why did they want to kill you?” George had a feeling that he had touched upon the reason behind Linley’s depression.

“Because it was the Radiant Church who killed my mother.” Linley said calmly.

Standing next to Linley, both Yale and Reynolds were both surprised, but a flash of insight suddenly appeared within George’s mind. He immediately roared, “The

Radiant Church killed your mother? But you, Third Bro, aren't going to seek revenge? What, are you afraid?"

"Not seek revenge?"

Those three words seemed to have struck Linley like a lightning bolt.

"Right. It was the Radiant Church." Linley's dull eyes slowly began to sharpen.

"If it wasn't for the Radiant Church constantly searching for pure souls to offer to the Radiant Sovereign, then Clayde wouldn't have given my mother to the Radiant Church, resulting in my mother's death."

"If it wasn't for my mother's death, my father wouldn't have died."

"If my father was alive, why would I go seek revenge? How could Grandpa Doehring have died as a result? What's more, Grandpa Doehring died as a result of helping me against those six Special Executors."

Linley began to feel hatred in his heart.

"This was all due to the Radiant Church!!! Radiant, radiant, haha! The Radiant Church is radiant? If it was radiant, then why would they murder people with pure, innocent souls and offer them to the Radiant Sovereign?" Linley's heart began to beat with hatred.

The Radiant Temple's actions were really too vicious.

Because of their viciousness, a series of tragedies had occurred, and his own life was one of those tragedies.

"Boss." Bebe saw that Linley's face was growing firm. He was worried that Linley would be rash. He mentally said, "Boss, the last words that Grandpa Doehring said to you were that he hoped you would live well."

Linley's heart trembled. How could Linley forget the final words which Grandpa Doehring's had said just before his soul had dissipated.

"Bebe, don't worry. I will never act rashly again. I will endure...the entity I will act against is the Radiant Church, rather than one specific individual. I know my own limits." Linley's eyes had grown firm and hard.

Seeing the changes in Linley's eyes and expression, Yale, George, and Reynolds couldn't help but feel ecstatic.

In recent days, Linley had always seemed so lost, so distant. He had never looked as resolved as he now did, and his eyes had never been so firm.

“Boss Yale. Second Bro. Fourth Bro. I’ve decided to leave.” Linley made his decision.

“Third Bro, you...” Yale and the others were surprised.

“Don’t worry. I’m fine.” Linley laughed, giving each of his three bros a punch to the chest. Yale and the others began to laugh as well. Seeing Linley like this, they felt much more relieved.

Wearing a warrior’s uniform, carrying the adamantine heavy sword on his back, and with Bebe on his shoulders, Linley left by himself.

After leaving the chaotic city of Hess, Linley headed towards the east. After half a day, Linley arrived at the border to the outer regions of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts. Seeing the boundless Mountain Range of Magical Beasts, a hint of a smile appeared on Linley’s face.

“Radiant Church, just wait. There will come a day when I will pull you out by the roots.” Linley’s gaze was extremely firm.

He lost his father. He had lost his mother. He had lost Grandpa Doehring.

The only one Linley could now rely on was himself.

“Boss, are we going to cut through the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts?” Bebe was confused.

Linley laughed, shaking his head. “No. First, we go to the core regions of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts, and then we’ll head straight north, until we reach the very end.” “That’s a distance of ten thousand kilometers!” Bebe was somewhat stunned. “And the core regions have a lot of extremely powerful magical beasts.” Bebe was absolutely shocked that Linley wanted to travel in the core region of the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts for ten thousand kilometers.

“If not, how shall I train? I haven’t yet mastered the correct way to use the heavy sword. If I can’t even master the heavy sword and use it properly, how will I deal with the Radiant Church?”

Linley immediately strode forward, entering the Mountain Range of Magical Beasts. And with this, Linley began the longest period of training in his entire life...

**[End of Book 07]**